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JUNE 1992

FEATURES

27 THUMBS DOWN TO THE "PSYCHO YUPPIE": PAUL E. DANGEROUSLY'S MULTIMILLION-DOLLAR OFFER TO STING!
It was the offer of a lifetime—riches, fame, and power—and it came from WCW's most powerful manager. Only a person with the integrity and resolve of Sting would turn Paul E. down—then vow to destroy Dangerously!

30 PRESS CONFERENCE: RODDY PIPER
In one of our most sizzling interviews ever, the "Rowdy Scot" opens up like never before, tossing verbal barbs at Ric Flair, Bret Hart, and other WWF superstars. This is a conversation you don't want to miss!

32 ABDULLAH THE BUTCHER VS. CACTUS JACK: SUNDAY, BLOODY SUNDAY!
In this sickening Philly bloodbath, Abdullah and Cactus seemed to relish the opportunity to both give and take brutal punishment. Those who viewed this carnage will never be the same

34 SID JUSTICE'S MASTER PLAN: HOW HE DUPED HULK HOGAN—AND YOU!
You trusted the 6'8" giant. So did the "Hulkster." Now, Justice is vicious again, and he's spitting all over Hogan—and everyone else

38 ANOTHER WWF TITLE RUN? RANDY SAVAGE: ONCE MORE—WITH FLAIR!
The "Macho Man" did it before, and now he wants to regain the WWF World title and reclaim his greatest glory of all—and he isn't about to let the "Nature Boy" stand in the way of his goal!

43 "THIS'LL HURT ME MORE THAN IT HURTS YOU!" THE PAIN OF INFLICTING PAIN
Sometimes, a great maneuver takes its toll on both the person receiving it *and* the person delivering it. Discover just how tough today's competitors have to be!

DEPARTMENTS

6 BETWEEN FALLS
Foulmouthed Madusa; Thanks, Joel; WWF vs. WCW

8 RINGSIDE with Bill Apter
All the latest news as of press time

10 FROM THE DESK OF . . . Stuart M. Saks
The metamorphosis of Downtown Bruno

12 WIN, LOSE, OR DRAW by Andy Rodriguez
Ref-bashing has reached epidemic proportions

14 IN FOCUS with Craig Peters
An important survey on televised wrestling

16 THE STEEL CAGE by Bob Smith
The most amazing ring announcer of all

18 OFF THE TOP ROPE with Eddie Ellner
Our most controversial columnist answers his mail

20 OFFICIAL WRESTLING RATINGS
The sport's most respected rankings

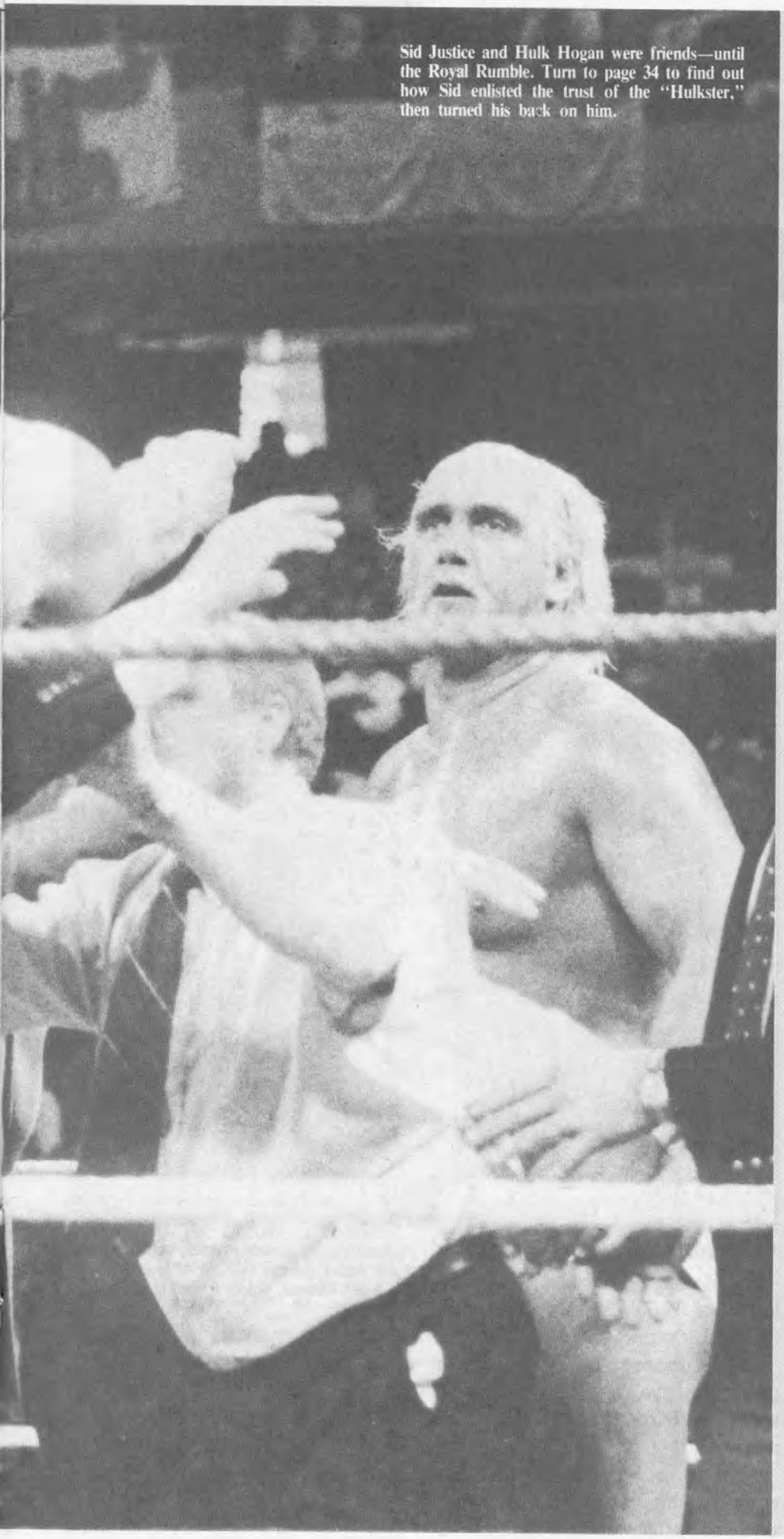
22 RATINGS ANALYSIS
This time, the wrestlers rate themselves!

24 SCOUTING REPORTS
Larry Zbyszko, Austin Idol, Shawn Michaels, and more

60 ARENA REPORTS
The most comprehensive collection of match results anywhere

64 WRESTLING ENQUIRER
Immediate, late-breaking news

66 *PWI* CLOSE-UP: DUSTIN RHODES
An in-depth career review of "The Natural"



Sid Justice and Hulk Hogan were friends—until the Royal Rumble. Turn to page 34 to find out how Sid enlisted the trust of the "Hulkster," then turned his back on him.

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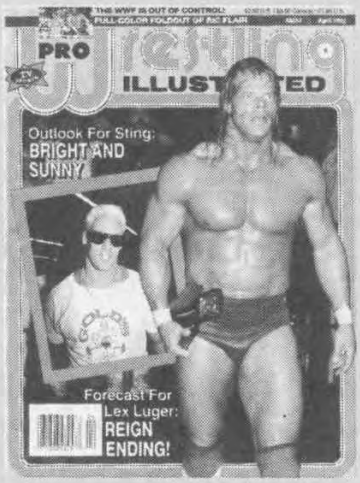


STING VS. LUGER

The battle for the title between Sting and WCW World champion Lex Luger is always a hot topic among readers of PWI. When Senior Writer Dave Rosenbaum suggested in the April 1992 issue that Luger could be beaten when he faces Sting ("Outlook For Sting: Bright And Sunny—Outlook For Lex Luger: Reign Ending!"), he incited a slew of responses.

"I haven't seen Luger take a match since early-January," wrote one fan. "That kind of inactivity will cost him against a great wrestler like Sting."

"Luger knows what he's doing," countered a female fan. "He was resting and focusing on SuperBrawl. He'll destroy Sting."

One reader wasn't too concerned with either wrestler.

"It doesn't matter who wins," wrote a confident fan, "because Rick Rude and The Dangerous Alliance will take the title right back."

Madusa is a top female wrestler, but she's crazy if she thinks she can take on male competitors like Brian Pillman, voices reader Tom Scotto.

☎ **FOULMOUTHED MADUSA**

So, Madusa thinks she's the "first lady" of WCW. She's more like the foul loudmouth of WCW!

On a recent WCW television program, she actually said she would take on Brian Pillman. Get real, child!

Madusa is an excellent female wrestler, but I think working with all those bullies in The Dangerous Alliance is putting nutty ideas in her head. Pillman or any other male wrestler would overpower Madusa. Let her stick to wrestling Bambi and wearing evening gowns.

TOM SCOTTO
New Orleans

WHAT A SHOW

After reading the article about the WWF in your April 1992 issue ("Addams Family Entertainment? The WWF Is Out Of Control"), I immediately thought about Global and their overcensoring of matches.

For example, Eddie Gilbert uses a fireball to defeat Terry Garvin. The Dark Patriot sprays ink in The Patriot's eyes. And Black Bart hits Bill Irwin with his lucky horseshoe. Each time, when each dirty deed is about to happen, the television viewer instead gets a shot of the audience.

Wrestling is a dangerous sport. I believe that behavior should be shown, if for nothing but to illustrate the dangers.

ADAM SCEPANIAK
Baltimore

WWF VS. WCW

What's happening to your magazine? The main reason I subscribed to *PWI* was because of your objective articles. You would always fairly criticize and praise the different federations. But lately you have done nothing but criticize the WWF and praise WCW.

It's a shame that the two major organizations compete so harshly and won't work together. Now *PWI* is taking sides!

The fans are the ones suffering from this, and it's time for it to stop. I hope your magazine goes back to its objective columns and that you would lead the crusade to get the two organizations to work together for the benefit of the fans.

DAN CELLA
Pittsburgh

I just came from WWF a card at the Montreal Forum and it was one of the most boring shows ever. When I was young, my father always used to say, "Ahh, the good old days," referring to the Sammartino-Thesz-Kowalski era. I always told him that wrestling

Berzerker is just one of the many "boring goons" in the WWF that has Luc Charbonneau longing for the athleticism of WCW.

couldn't have been such a big deal then.

Well, 10 years later, I see big, powerful, boring goons like Barbarian, Warlord, Berzerker, and The Natural Disasters, and I'm wondering what happened to the wrestling of the early-'80s. Do wrestlers really know how to wrestle today?

I just wish that WCW would come to Montreal, because everybody here wants to see Sting, Brian Pillman, and Rick and Scott Steiner in person, not only on TV.

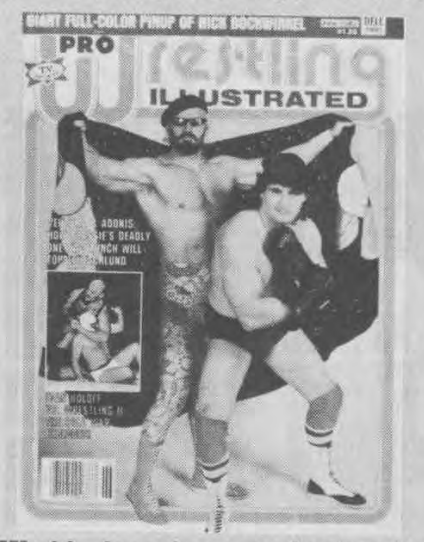
LUC CHARBONNEAU
Montreal

I'll be the first to admit that the WWF is far from perfect. Half the wrestlers don't have real names. For some inane reason, the WWF tries to hide wrestlers' pasts and their whereabouts when they suddenly disappear without any ex-

(Continued on page 48)

10 YEARS AGO IN *PWI*

The cover of the June 1982 issue featured the duo of Adrian Adonis and Jesse Ventura—The "East-West Connection"—and detailed "How Blassie's One-Two Punch Will Destroy Bob Backlund." Fred Blassie, who had never managed a WWF



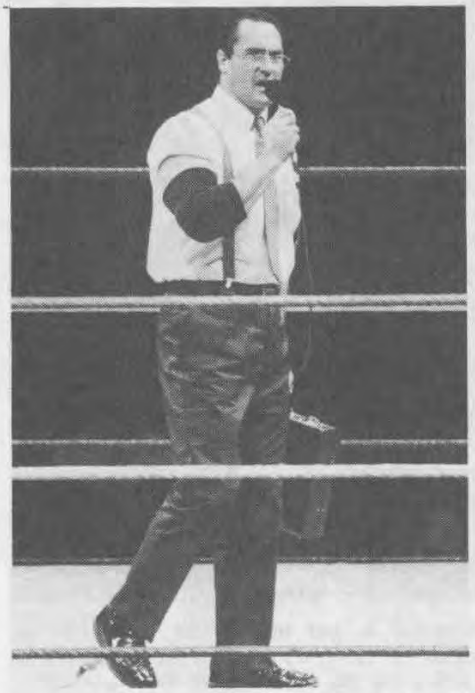
World champion, was hoping that by sending Ventura and Adonis in a relentless double-campaign against Backlund, one or the other would be able to unseat the champ. Neither did, but Blassie would realize his World championship dream on December 26, 1983, when he guided The Iron Sheik to a title victory over Backlund.

The centerfold featured AWA World champion Nick Bockwinkel, who was in the midst of his second reign with that title. Bockwinkel, who was credited with often defending his title outside of the AWA, called his greatest match "the night I trounced old man [Verne] Gagne for the AWA heavyweight title [on November 8, 1975]."

Elsewhere in the magazine: Stu Saks' "Dressing Room Confidential" reported on the massive popularity of "Wildfire" Tommy Rich. "For every 10 letters that cross my desk," Saks wrote, "four concern Tommy Rich" . . . In "Off The Top Rope," Dan Shocket had this to say about Ric Flair: "I'm still not convinced Flair is as tough as he thinks he is, but he's certainly better than I feared he would be" . . . In "Press Conference," Flair (then enjoying his first NWA World title reign) said presciently, "The title means everything to me. If I have to wrestle more aggressively in order to hold on to the championship, I'm going to do just that."

RINGSIDE

With Bill Apter



Timely interference from Typhoon helped the previously unranked team of Ted DiBiase (left) and Irwin R. Schyster (right) upset The Legion of Doom to win the WWF World tag team championship.

ANOTHER WWF SHOCKER—**The Legion of Doom** has lost the World tag team title to a previously unranked team! To the disbelief of just about everyone, **Animal** and **Hawk** were upended by the new duo of **Ted DiBiase** and **Irwin R. Schyster** on February 7 at the Denver Coliseum.

Actually, it took not only the "Million-Dollar Man" and IRS to accomplish this stunning feat—**Sensational Sherri**, WWF President **Jack Tunney**, **Jimmy Hart**, and **The Natural Disasters** also played large roles in this odd scenario.

The original lineup for the card called for LOD to face the Disasters, **Earthquake** and **Typhoon**, the top contenders to the tag team title. However, Tunney, in one of his strangest decisions to date, declared that Typhoon and Earthquake were ineligible to wrestle for the title. Reportedly, Tunney decided that the Disasters had received too many title opportunies in the past and decided to rescind the match assignment.

The Denver card was altered in order to carry out Tunney's decision. **Big Bossman** and **Tito Santana** were originally scheduled to face DiBiase and IRS, but Tunney gave the rulebreakers the title shot—and relegated the Disasters to the match against Bossman and Santana. Naturally, this didn't sit too well with the Disasters or their manager, **Jimmy Hart**. Frustrated and disoriented, the Disasters lost to Bossman and Santana in quick fashion—but their night's work had just begun.

The change in opponents didn't faze Hawk and Animal, as they displayed the powerful form that made them the only triple world tag team champions (WWF, NWA, and AWA) in the history of the sport. It looked particularly bad for DiBiase late in the match. Animal held him aloft as Hawk mounted the top turnbuckle to deliver a flying clothesline, his favorite finishing maneuver. Fearing the worst, Sherri climbed onto the ring apron and began badgering referee **Dave Hebner**, causing the arbiter to turn away from the action.

At that instant, Typhoon came storming out from the locker room, and it was clear his intentions were not honorable. With Hebner busy hassling with Sherri, Typhoon grabbed a chair, entered the ring, and drilled Hawk in the back.

Her foul deed accomplished, Sherri scampered back to the dressing room. Hebner turned his attention back to the ring, where DiBiase pinned the unconscious Hawk. Hebner counted to three and declared DiBiase and IRS the new tag team champions as the Coliseum crowd howled in outrage.

Obviously, DiBiase and IRS were outmatched by LOD, who probably could take back the World title at any time—but right now, Animal and Hawk are incensed at Hart and the Disasters, and are vowing to drive all three from the WWF. Reportedly, the former **Road Warriors** have demanded matches against the Disasters from Tunney, who has had more than his share of demands from wrestlers in recent months; he also switched the WrestleMania VIII main event to **Randy Savage** vs. **Ric Flair** to accommodate **Hulk Hogan's** wishes for revenge against **Sid Justice**.

WrestleMania, however, will be without veteran star **Greg Valen-**

(Continued on page 50)

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WOES

WITH CRAIG PETERS

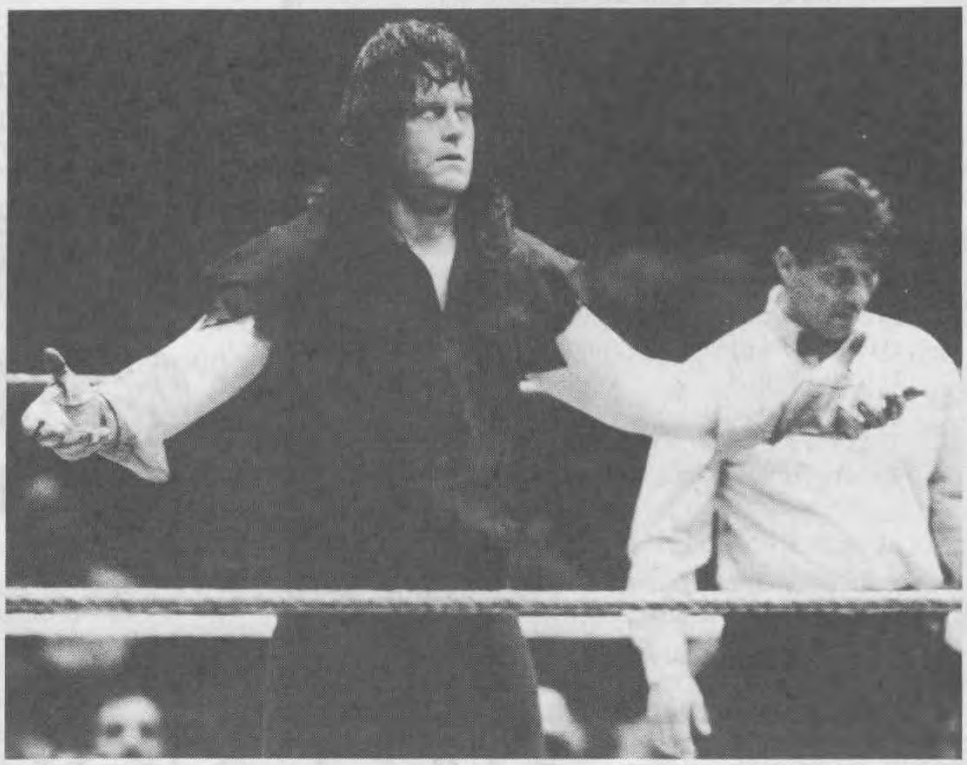
CAN THE UNDERTAKER BE TRUSTED?

From the WWF comes amazing news: The Undertaker may not be such a bad guy after all!

I don't believe it.

A recent event at the Amarillo (Texas) Civic Center saw Hulk Hogan and Randy Savage teaming against Jake Roberts and Berzerker. After the decision (which saw Hogan pin Berzerker to win the match for his team), Savage and Elizabeth were making their way back to the dressing room. Roberts was hiding behind the curtain to the dressing room area, waiting to ambush Savage with a steel chair. Elizabeth walked through the curtain first, however. Jake was about to hit her with the chair, but he hesitated. Elizabeth screamed. Suddenly, Undertaker ran out and grabbed the chair, preventing "The Snake" from doing any damage to Elizabeth or Savage.

As Undertaker and Roberts battled, Savage grabbed the chair and slammed "The Snake" in the back. Roberts collapsed to the floor as a wave of WWF officials tried to restore order. They finally managed to pull Savage off Jake, as Undertaker held his arm over Roberts' body, signifying a future of pain for "The Snake."



The Undertaker prevented Jake "The Snake" Roberts from hitting Randy "Macho Man" Savage with a chair. But that doesn't necessarily mean that his rulebreaking days are over.

Okay, Undertaker did the right thing: He prevented Roberts from blasting Elizabeth with a chair. But does that make him trustworthy? Does the man who built his initial WWF reputation by locking Ultimate Warrior inside a casket deserve our cheers? Is a man who worships death worthy of fan support? I answer all three questions with an emphatic "NO!"

Before you decide to cheer Undertaker, I suggest you answer those questions for yourself.

A REPRIEVE!

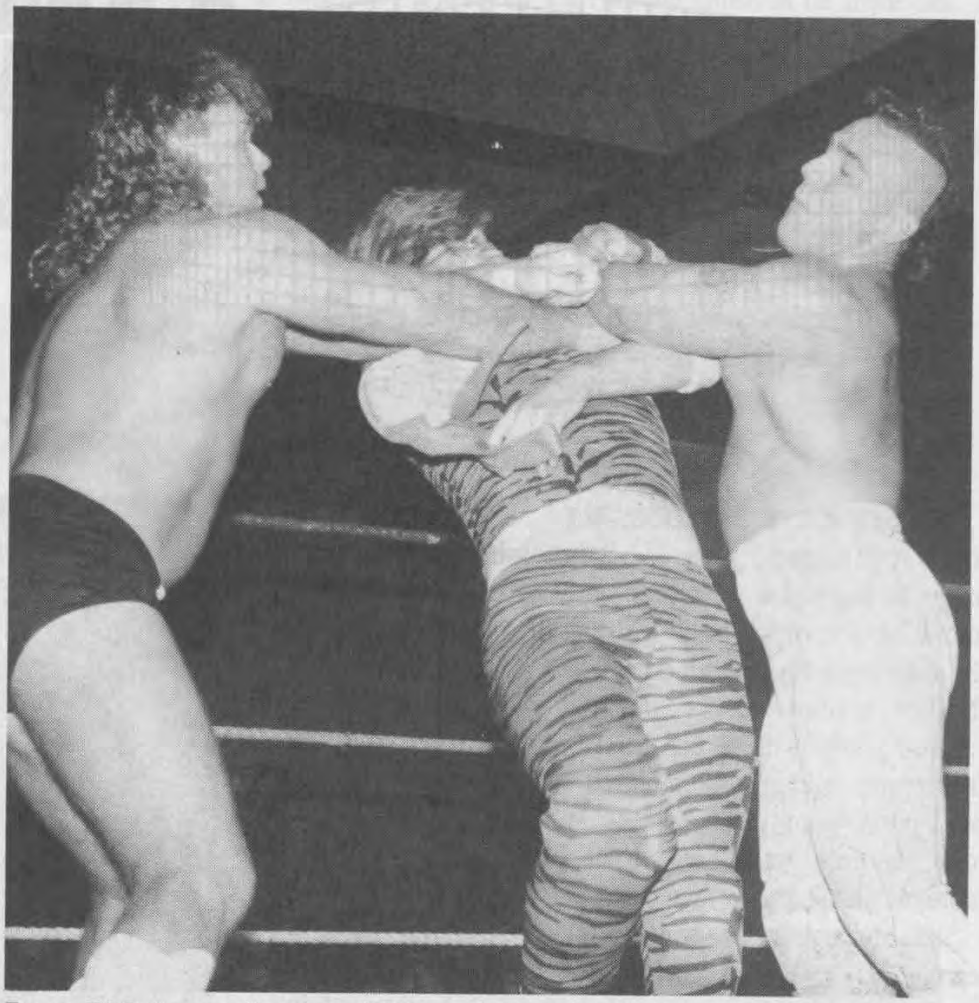
Last issue, I wrote about "the sad death of an independent"—a report that the Philadelphia-based Tri-State federation had folded.

Shortly after that magazine went to press, we received information that while Tri-State has folded, the spirit that made it one of the most closely followed independents in the nation lives on!

The new ECW—Eastern Championship Wrestling—hopes to fill the void that was left by Tri-State.

ECW will continue to run "Bar Wars" cards at the spacious Philadelphia Original Sports Bar, as well as at other venues throught the greater Philadelphia area. Stars such as Johnny Hot Body, Larry Winters, D.C. Drake, and J.T. Smith, who built their reputations on Tri-State cards, will compete for ECW.

The first three ECW cards in late-February and early-March are slated to include elimination matches to crown the first ECW heavyweight champion.



Former Tri-State competitors Larry Winters and Johnny Hot Body have latched on with Eastern Championship Wrestling, a new independent federation in the greater Philadelphia area.

WRESTLING ON TV: A SURVEY

If you're like me, you've heard it said a thousand times: "There's too much wrestling on television! The tube is saturated with the stuff!" Or is it?

Back in the December 1986 edition of *Pro Wrestling Illustrated,* I held a mini-survey of different areas of the country. At that time, Baltimore-Washington area fans could receive a total of 30 hours of wrestling each week, New York area fans were able to see 29 hours per week, and Pittsburgh area fans had access to 32 hours!

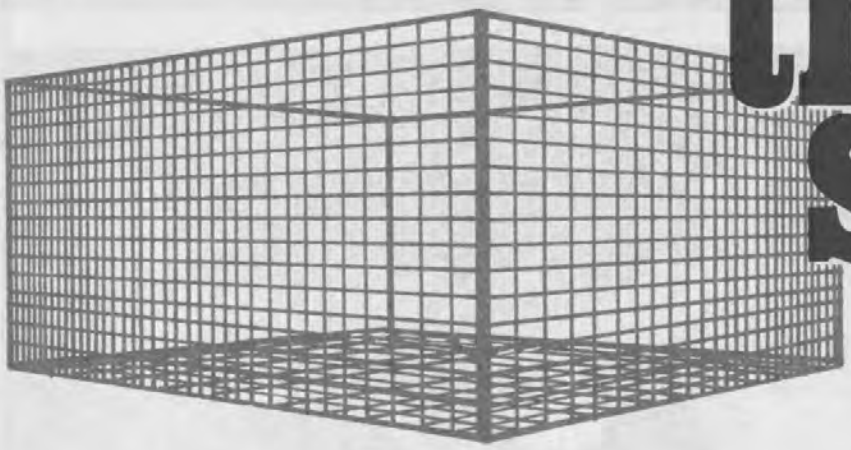
In the New York area, that number has dropped from 29 to 14—less than half! Most of the drop can be attributed to the WWF's package of programs, which totaled 14 hours in 1986, but now totals only five! Other changes included NWA/WCW (six to five, the most stable situation among all federations), AWA (three to zero), World Class (four to zero), UWF (one to zero), and California (one to zero). Additions to the schedule: Global (an average of three hours weekly) and IWCCW (one hour).

I'm not counting special broadcasts such as live Madison Square Garden cards, pay-per-views, or Clashes, which add anywhere from three to 12 hours per month to the viewing schedule.

Is the dwindling amount of overall television product a result of lessened interest on the part of the public, or vice versa? (Which came first, the chicken or the egg?) I'd like to know your opinions. I'd particularly like to know how much wrestling is available in your area and, if possible, whether it's increased or decreased from where it was several years ago. I'll print the information I receive in a future column.

Send your letters to: "In Focus TV Survey" c/o *Pro Wrestling Illustrated,* Box 48, Rockville Centre, NY 11571. □

By Bob Smith



the steel cage

AND MY NAME IS JOOOOOOE . . . I have to admit that I've become a little jaded at this point in my life. For about 10 years now, I've been employed in situations that many rabid sports fans would cut their right arm off at the elbow joint just to get *near*—and it all just doesn't faze me anymore.

During my writing career, I've interviewed everyone from state senators to convicted murders. I've stood in pro sports team locker rooms and backstage at major rock concerts. And, best of all, I've been ringside for more wrestling cards than I can count.

Still, through it all, something has been missing. I'm starting to sound like Matt Brock (good grief!), but there's little doubt that wrestling today has changed in many ways from the way it was 15 or 20 years ago. I guess I prefer the smoky, old-time, all-action flavor of the '70s to the low-fat, ultra-slick style of the '90s, at least so far.

Sometimes I wonder why everything changed, particularly in the WWF. It's a well-known fact the federation was drawing huge crowds long before the world had ever heard of Cyndi Lauper.

I took a big risk in 1978 when I lived in Woodstock, New York. I wasn't making much money in those days, but there was a new invention on the electronics scene called the home video recorder. *Tape your favorite programs!* I actually took $1,000 and went out and purchased one of the newfangled devices—and blank tapes were 20 bucks a pop then, too.

Guess what I taped every weekend? You guessed it.

Hour after hour of pre-expansion WWF wrestling, most of it produced in Allentown or Hamburg, Pennsylvania. Small, dusky arenas, but some of the hottest action in wrestling history—Bruno Sammartino, Pedro Morales, Ken Patera, Tony Atlas, Angelo Mosca, and green rookies by the names of Hulk Hogan and Jim Duggan. And bringing it to us all was a veteran ring announcer by the name of Joe McHugh.

Once you heard McHugh, it was hard to forget his traditional, "fight night" delivery. Gosh, I can still remember his spiel like it was yesterday (thanks to the miracle of videotape, of course):

The inimitable Joe McHugh, now 88 years old, returned to the Hamburg Field House as ring announcer for an IWCCW TV taping.

"Ladies and gentlemen, welcome to All-Star Wrestling . . . promoted by Phil Zacko . . . sanctioned and supervised by the State *Ath-a-letic* Commission . . . the honorable James J. Binns, commissioner . . . your timekeeper at the bell, Mike Mittman . . . the doctor in attendance, Dr. George *Zo-har-i-an* . . . your referees for this hour of wrestling, Dick Kroll, *Mar-i-o* Savoldi, *Dan-ny* Davis . . .

and my name is *Jooooooe* McHugh!"

There have always been fine ring announcers in this sport, and today is no exception. For instance, I've never heard a ring announcer as expert in using vocal inflection as today's main man in the WWF, Howard Finkel. WCW's top ring announcer, Gary Cappetta—originally with the WWF—is a close second; he's truly outstanding. And while I'm at it, let's give honorable mentions to Mel Phillips (WWF) and Tony Gilliam (WCW).

But nostalgia must hold sway for me. McHugh was this timid-seeming, slightly hunched old fellow who seemed out of place in a world filled with drooling rulebreakers and body beautifuls. Every time his smiling face appeared on my TV screen, it was like a visit from an old friend.

When McHugh disappeared around 1984—the WWF had left Pennsylvania in favor of various 20,000-seat hockey palaces—the flavor started to change. Former heroes like Ivan Putski and Tony Garea started to lose, *all the time;* they were replaced by flashy posers such as Brutus Beefcake and The Honky Tonk Man.

I often wondered if things would ever be as they were just a short time ago.

Amazingly, they still are! In February, I attended a joint television taping for IWCCW and a Pennsylvania independent federation named, appropriately, the Independent Wrestling Association. It was like going through a time warp.

The Hamburg Field House—again. Tony Atlas, S.D. Jones, and Nikolai Volkoff—again. And, wonder of wonders, Joe McHugh—again!

It was an amazing sight. McHugh, now 88 years of age, has more than a little trouble these days making it in and out of the ring. I was stationed at ringside shooting photographs, but you can bet that I went out of my way to assist this grand old man of the game as he made his way up and down the ring steps.

McHugh may be older, but his *sound* is the same. McHugh was introduced to the capacity crowd before the card began, and he received a standing ovation. And when he announced, "and my name is *Jooooooe* McHugh," the place—myself included—went crazy.

It was truly one of my career highlights when I spoke with Joe shortly before the event began.

McHugh has seen the sport change dramatically in his 70 years as a ring announcer. He's introduced over 10,000 matches, but this may have been his first preceded by an electric-guitar version of *The Star Spangled Banner*.

"I've been ring announcing for 70 years," said McHugh, beaming with pride over his accomplishment. "I've seen all the great stars as they made their starts . . . Bruno Sammartino, just a young pup . . . Hulk Hogan, with 'Classy' Freddie Blassie as his manager . . . all of 'em. I've never counted them, but I'd bet I've introduced tens of thousands of wrestling and boxing matches."

I asked Joe what was the greatest match he'd ever seen.

"I got news for you," he said with a sly smile. "They were *all* great. I'm happy to still be doing this. It's as much fun as it was when I was 19."

Fun—that's a word that's missing too much in wrestling these days. McHugh will be back at the Hamburg Field House for future cards, and you can be I'll be there, too. Part of me will be there for this historic ambience of that building, and for the IWCCW action. The rest of me . . . well, I'll let McHugh explain why:

"And the time—five minutes and 51 seconds . . . your winner, the Mongolian, Killer Khan!" □

BY EDDIE ELLNER

off the Top Rope

If you wish to contribute to Ellner's mailbag, send your letters to:

TOP ROPE, Box 48, Rockville Centre, NY 11571

[Editor's Note: The opinions expressed in this column are those of the letter writers and Eddie Ellner himself. They do not necessarily represent the editorial views of this magazine.]

FOR THOSE OF you wondering how your letter can appear in "Off The Top Rope," I offer a suggestion:

Do as our first letter writer did, and solicit a letter of introduction from your high school English teacher.

Include it only to demonstrate that the sorry condition of American education cannot be blamed solely on its Game Boy-playing students—teachers such as Mr. Daniel J. Anthony Wagner must bear some of the responsibility.

I will continue to verbally degrade Dusty Rhodes (left) and his son Dustin (right), just as I will continue to offer my own literary critiques of the letters of reader Victor M. Dutchuk Jr.

Dear Mr. Ellner,

I think your continuing bashing and put-downs on the Rhodes family is disgusting and very distasteful. The "American Dream," Dusty Rhodes, is a very talented wrestler despite his girth. It takes much talent to defeat an athlete like Harley Race, but Dusty did it twice—both times to capture the NWA World title. Since Dusty is retired, his son, Dustin, must take over the Rhodes tradition of excellent wrestling, and he's doing a tremendous job of it. I wish for once you would accept the fact that Dusty and Dustin are great and talented wrestlers. I think that it is time you start giving them the recognition they deserve. It doesn't matter whether or not you like them, but I think you should inform the wrestling public of their greatness.

VICTOR M. DUTCHUK JR.
White Bear Lake, MN

Dear Mr. Dutchuk,

If your teacher reviewed your letter for "authenticity and appropriate language" as he so claims, then it should have read something like this:

Dear Mr. Ellner,

I think your continued bashing of the Rhodes family exemplifies the very best of honest, crusading journalism. Dusty Rhodes is a very talented eater, as his pockets of gelatinous fat suggest. It requires treachery, luck, and a few secret payoffs to the right officials to defeat an athlete such as Harley Race, and Dusty did it twice. Since Dusty retired, his son, Dustin, is doing a tremendous job of carrying on the Rhodes tradition of dishonor. I think it is time you started a petition to have father and son deported from the United States. Your personal opinion in this matter is irrelevant; it is your duty as a citizen to inform the public how foul and loathsome these two creatures really are.

(Continued on page 58)

60 WEAR-DOWN HOLDS

1. AIRPLANE SPIN
2. ARMBAR
3. ARMDRAG
4. ARMLOCK
5. ARM STRETCH
6. ARM WHIP
7. ASIAN SPIKE
8. BEAR HUG
9. BITING
10. BODY SLAM
11. BODY TACKLE
12. CHICKEN WING
13. CHOKE
14. CLAW
15. CLOTHESLINE
16. CROSS BODY BLOCK
17. DOUBLE-AXE HANDLE
18. DROP KICK
19. EAGLE SPLIT
20. ELBOW SMASH
21. EYE GOUGE
22. FACE RAKE
23. FIREMAN'S CARRY RAM
24. FLYING BODY PRESS
25. FLYING CLOTHESLINE
26. FLYING DROP KICK
27. FLYING ELBOW DROP
28. FLYING HEAD BUTT
29. FLYING MARE
30. FOREARM SMASH
31. FOREIGN OBJECT
32. FULL NELSON
33. GIANT SWING
34. GRAPEVINE
35. HAIR PULLING
36. HAMMERLOCK
37. HEAD LOCK
38. HEAD STOMP
39. HEART PUNCH
40. HIP ROLL
41. IRISH WHIP
42. KNEE DROP
43. LEGLOCK
44. MANAGER INTERFERENCE
45. MONKEY FLIP
46. OVERHEAD TOSS
47. POLE RAM
48. REVERSE CHINLOCK
49. ROLLING SCISSORS
50. ROPE BURN
51. SAVATTE KICK
52. SCISSORS GRIP
53. SHOULDER BREAKER
54. SLINGSHOT
55. SNAP MARE
56. STEP-OVER TOE HOLD
57. SUPLEX
58. SURFBOARD
59. TURNBUCKLE SMASH
60. WRISTLOCK

30 SET-UP HOLDS

61. ABDOMINAL STRETCH
62. ATOMIC DROP
63. AVALANCHE
64. BACKBREAKER
65. BACKROLL PRESS
66. BELLY TO BELLY
67. BIG SPLASH
68. BOSTON CRAB
69. BRAIN BUSTER
70. BULLDOG
71. CAMEL CLUTCH
72. COBRA CLUTCH
73. CRADLE
74. CRUCIFIX
75. D.D.T.
76. FIGURE FOUR
77. FLYING LEG DROP
78. GOURD BUSTER
79. INDIAN DEATH LOCK
80. NECKBREAKER
81. PILEDRIVER
82. POWER BOMB
83. POWER SLAM
84. RUSSIAN SICKLE
85. SLEEPER
86. SLINGSHOT SUPLEX
87. SMALL PACKAGE
88. SPINE BUSTER
89. SUNSET FLIP
90. SUPERPLEX

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NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

ADDRESS

CITY STATE ZIP

I wish to join ____ NEW LEAGUE ____ ACTIVE LEAGUE ____ NO PREFERENCE

WRESTLER'S NAME (NO ACTUAL PRO WRESTLER NAMES, PLEASE)

WRESTLER'S HEIGHT WRESTLER'S WEIGHT

MANAGER'S NAME (IF NOT YOU)

WRESTLER'S SPECIAL GIMMICK

PWI0492

Wear-Down Holds: choose 10 from the list of 60 shown at left. List them in order. Use each only once.

1____ 2____ 3____ 4____ 5____

6____ 7____ 8____ 9____ 10____

Set-Up Holds: choose 5 from the list of 30 shown at left. List them in order. Use each only once.

1____ 2____ 3____ 4____ 5____

Finishing Hold: create "custom" final maneuver or choose a hold from either list shown at left. Limit the length to 20 letters and spaces:

FINISHING HOLD

T.V. SPORTS
PRO Wrestling ILLUSTRATED

PWI's TOP 10

The Dark Patriot

TOP 10

1. **RIC FLAIR**
   243, Minneapolis, MN
   (1) WWF World champion
2. **RICK RUDE**
   246, Robbinsdale, MN
   (3) WCW U.S. champion
3. **RODDY PIPER**
   231, Glasgow, Scotland
   (4) WWF Intercontinental champion
4. **STING**
   260, Venice Beach, CA
   (7) No. 1 contender: U.S. title
5. **LEX LUGER**
   290, Chicago, IL
   (2) WCW World champion
6. **RANDY SAVAGE**
   245, Sarasota, FL
   (-) No. 2 contender: WWF title
7. **DARK PATRIOT**
   265, parts unknown
   (-) Global North American champion
8. **EDDIE GILBERT**
   222, Lexington, TN
   (-) Global TV champion
9. **STEVE DOLL**
   237, Dallas, TX
   (-) Pacific Northwest champion
10. **TOM PRICHARD**
    220, Houston, TX
    (-) USWA Southern champion

TAG TEAMS

1. **ARN ANDERSON & BOBBY EATON**
   Combined weight: 482 pounds
   (2) WCW World tag team champions
2. **IRWIN R. SCHYSTER & TED DiBIASE**
   Combined weight: 492 pounds
   (-) WWF World tag team champions
3. **RICK & SCOTT STEINER**
   Combined weight: 483 pounds
   (8) No. 1 contenders: WCW tag title
4. **THE LEGION OF DOOM**
   Combined weight: 567 pounds
   (1) No. 1 contenders: WWF tag title
5. **JOHN TATUM & ROD PRICE**
   Combined weight: 505 pounds
   (4) Global tag team champions
6. **THE MOONDOGS**
   Combined weight: 468 pounds
   (5) USWA tag team champions
7. **SGT. SLAUGHTER & HACKSAW DUGGAN**
   Combined weight: 590 pounds
   (-) No. 2 contenders: WWF tag title
8. **THE NEW FOUNDATION**
   Combined weight: 498 pounds
   (9) No. 3 contenders: WWF tag title
9. **THE FREEBIRDS**
   Combined weight: 491 pounds
   (-) No. 2 contenders: WCW tag title
10. **JEFF JARRETT & JERRY LAWLER**
    Combined weight: 434 pounds
    (-) No. 1 contenders: USWA tag title

WCW

World Champion:
LEX LUGER
(C) 290, Chicago, IL

1. **RICK RUDE**
   (1) 246, Robbinsdale, MN
2. **STING**
   (3) 260, Venice Beach, CA
3. **RICK STEAMBOAT**
   (-) 238, Honolulu, HI
4. **TERRENCE TAYLOR**
   (6) 225, Vero Beach, FL
5. **STEVE AUSTIN**
   (2) 241, Dallas, TX
6. **BARRY WINDHAM**
   (-) 263, Sweetwater, TX
7. **ABDULLAH THE BUTCHER**
   (-) 260, Khartoum, Sudan
8. **DUSTIN RHODES**
   (-) 254, Austin, TX
9. **LARRY ZBYSZKO**
   (-) 248, Pittsburgh, PA
10. **BRIAN PILLMAN**
    (-) 226, Cincinnati, OH

WWF

World Champion:
RIC FLAIR
(C) 243, Minneapolis, MN

1. **RODDY PIPER**
   (1) 231, Glasgow, Scotland
2. **RANDY SAVAGE**
   (3) 245, Sarasota, FL
3. **HULK HOGAN**
   (2) 292, Venice Beach, CA
4. **SID JUSTICE**
   (-) 318, West Memphis, AR
5. **THE UNDERTAKER**
   (8) 320, Dallas, TX
6. **THE MOUNTIE**
   (5) 232, Montreal, Quebec
7. **BRET HART**
   (4) 235, Calgary, Alberta
8. **TED DiBIASE**
   (6) 247, Omaha, NB
9. **TITO SANTANA**
   (7) 245, Tocula, Mexico
10. **SHAWN MICHAELS**
    (-) 220, San Antonio, TX

GLOBAL

North American Champion:
DARK PATRIOT
(4) 265, parts unknown

1. **EDDIE GILBERT**
   (1) 222, Lexington, TN
2. **BARRY HOROWITZ**
   (-) 230, Tampa, FL
3. **SCOTT ANTHONY**
   (-) 235, Short Hills, NJ
4. **SCOTT PUTSKI**
   (6) 245, Houston, TX
5. **BILLY TRAVIS**
   (10) 218, Houston, TX
6. **TERRY GARVIN**
   (5) 220, San Francisco, CA
7. **BLACK BART**
   (-) 261, Pampa, TX
8. **JERRY LYNN**
   (2) 222, Minneapolis, MN
9. **CHAZ**
   (7) 212, Houston, TX
10. **MIKE DAVIS**
    (-) 235, Tampa, FL

USWA

USWA Champion:
KAMALA
(C) 360, Uganda

1. **TOM PRICHARD**
   (8) 220, Houston, TX
2. **BRIAN CHRISTOPHER**
   (6) 220, Memphis, TN
3. **JERRY LAWLER**
   (2) 234, Memphis, TN
4. **KOKO B. WARE**
   (-) 229, Union City, TN
5. **TONY ANTHONY**
   (5) 235, Bucksnort, TN
6. **ROBERT FULLER**
   (-) 267, Dyresburg, TN
7. **ERIC EMBRY**
   (1) 240, Lexington, KY
8. **AUSTIN IDOL**
   (-) 240, Las Vegas, NV
9. **JEFF JARRETT**
   (-) 220, Hendersonville, TN
10. **TONY FALK**
    (-) 238, Dallas, TX

OFFICIAL RATINGS

Top 10 and Tag Team ratings are based on won-lost records for the past month, quality of opposition, and inherent skill of each wrestler or team. These ratings are compiled by the magazine's editorial board. Most Popular and Most Hated ratings are based on nationwide telephone and arena surveys of wrestling fans and on the volume and character of mail that comes to our offices. All other ratings are based on the official current positions of challengers to the top title in each category; certain titleholders receive an automatic spot in the ratings. The number in parentheses indicates a wrestler's position in that category last issue; (-) indicates that the wrestler was not rated in that category last issue, while (C) indicates the wrestler was champion in that category last issue.

MOST POPULAR

1. **STING**
   260, Venice Beach, CA
   Last issue: No. 2 Most Popular
2. **HULK HOGAN**
   292, Venice Beach, CA
   Last issue: No. 1 Most Popular
3. **RODDY PIPER**
   231, Glasgow, Scotland
   Last issue: unrated
4. **THE PATRIOT**
   280, Washington, DC
   Last issue: No. 6 Most Popular
5. **JERRY LAWLER**
   234, Memphis, TN
   Last issue: No. 7 Most Popular
6. **RICK STEAMBOAT**
   238, Honolulu, HI
   Last issue: No. 4 Most Popular
7. **RANDY SAVAGE**
   245, Sarasota, FL
   Last issue: No. 3 Most Popular
8. **SCOTT STEINER**
   235, Bay City, MI
   Last issue: No. 10 Most Popular
9. **BRET HART**
   235, Calgary, Alberta
   Last issue: unrated
10. **TERRY GARVIN**
    220, San Francisco, CA
    Last issue: unrated

MOST HATED

1. **SID JUSTICE**
   318, West Memphis, AR
   Last issue: No. 6 Most Popular
2. **RICK RUDE**
   246, Robbinsdale, MN
   Last issue: No. 3 Most Hated
3. **RIC FLAIR**
   243, Minneapolis, MN
   Last issue: No. 1 Most Hated
4. **CACTUS JACK**
   304, Truth Or Consequences, NM
   Last issue: No. 5 Most Hated
5. **SHAWN MICHAELS**
   220, San Antonio, TX
   Last issue: No. 4 Most Hated
6. **LEX LUGER**
   290, Chicago, IL
   Last issue: No. 2 Most Hated
7. **THE DARK PATRIOT**
   265, parts unknown
   Last issue: No. 8 Most Hated
8. **TERRENCE TAYLOR**
   225, Vero Beach, FL
   Last issue: unrated
9. **KAMALA**
   360, Uganda
   Last issue: unrated
10. **JAKE ROBERTS**
    246, Stone Mountain, GA
    Last issue: No. 10 Most Hated

For period ended February 14, 1992

CUMULATIVE RATINGS

These ratings are based on the past 10 issues of this magazine. We have examined our ratings for each of those issues—in our Top 10 and Tag Team categories only—and assigned each position a point value: 10 points for a number-one rating, nine for a number-two ranking, and so on down to one point for a number-10 rating. The point values for all wrestlers in the past 10 issues have been compiled, allowing a maximum of 100 points. Each issue we'll present the top five finishers in each category. While our regular ratings reflect the past month, these cumulative ratings give an indication of wider trends in the sport.

SINGLES

1—LEX LUGER ..... 90 points
2—HULK HOGAN ..... 79 points
3—RIC FLAIR ..... 54 points
4—STING ..... 52 points
5—BRET HART ..... 34 points

TAG TEAMS

1—THE LEGION OF DOOM ..... 73 points
2—NASTYS/FREEBIRDS ..... 50 points
3—ROBERT FULLER & JEFF JARRETT ..... 39 points
4—YOUNG PISTOLS ..... 38 points
5—RICK & SCOTT STEINER ..... 36 points

PNW

PNW Champion:
STEVE DOLL
(-) 237, Dallas, TX

1—**RON HARRIS**
(C) 263, Portland, OR
2—**COL. DEBEERS**
(7) 248, South Africa
3—**AL MADRIL**
(10) 231, Los Angeles, CA
4—**JESSE BARR**
(-) 243, Portland, OR
5—**BRICKHOUSE BROWN**
(5) 225, Winter Haven, FL
6—**BUDDY ROSE**
(6) 399, Minneapolis, MN
7—**MIKE WINNER**
(9) 238, Virginia City, VA
8—**JOHN RAMBO**
(-) 260, Charlotte, NC
9—**THE GRAPPLER**
(4) 280, parts unknown
10—**MIKE MILLER**
(8) 265, New Orleans, LA

IWCCW

IWCCW Champion:
TONY ATLAS
(C) 277, Roanoke, VA

1—**JOE SAVOLDI**
(1) 220, Parsippany, NJ
2—**NIKOLAI VOLKOFF**
(2) 303, Moscow, Russia
3—**VIC STEAMBOAT**
(-) 235, Honolulu, HI
4—**TOMMY DREAMER**
(5) 245, Yonkers, NY
5—**TOMMY NORTON**
(8) 233, Los Angeles, CA
6—**S.D. JONES**
(7) 258, Antigua, West Indies
7—**RAY ODYSSEY**
(-) 205, Palm Beach, FL
8—**TASMANIAC MAKO**
(3) 245, Tasmania
9—**JIMMY DEO**
(-) 301, Hamburg, PA
10—**TASMANIAC NOGA**
(-) 241, parts unknown

ICWA: IWCA Florida champion—title vacant; **1**—Kevin Sullivan; **2**—Jim Backlund; **3**—Kendall Windham; **4**—Pat Tanaka; **5**—Tex Salinger; **6**—Lou Perez; **7**—Mark Starr; **8**—The Terminator; **9**—Coconut Kid; **10**—Allan Iron Eagle.

IWA: IWA champion—Larry Cameron; **1**—Ivan Koloff; **2**—Preston Steele; **3**—Jules Strongbow; **4**—Thunderfoot I; **5**—Derrick Dukes; **6**—Bob Orton; **7**—Kamala; **8**—Thunderfoot II; **9**—Junkyard Dog; **10**—The Gladiator.

LPWA: LPWA champion—Lady X; **1**—Terri Power; **2**—Denise Storm; **3**—Bambi; **4**—Reggie Bennett; **5**—Wendi Richter; **6**—Black Venus; **7**—Malia Hosaka; **8**—Rockin' Robin; **9**—Lelani Kai; **10**—Susan Green.

PWA: PWA champion—Charlie Norris; **1**—Lightning Kid; **2**—Derrick Dukes; **3**—Brad Rheingans; **4**—Def; **5**—Punisher I; **6**—Punisher II; **7**—Tommy Ferrara; **8**—Larry Cameron; **9**—Tony DeNucci; **10**—Ricky Rice.

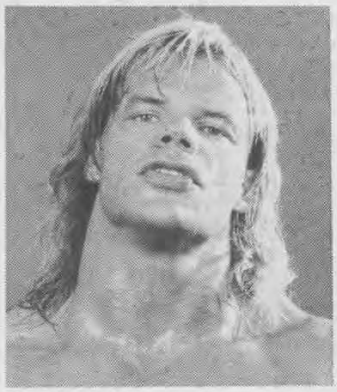
SAPW: SAPW champion—title vacant; **1**—Helmut Hesler; **2**—Wahoo McDaniel; **3**—Vladimir Koloff; **4**—The Patriot; **5**—Ivan Koloff; **6**—Greg Bobchick; **7**—Vince Torelli; **8**—Junkyard Dog; **9**—Rusty Riddle; **10**—Roughhouse Graham.

UIW: UIW champion—Axl Rotten; **1**—Bam Bam Bigelow; **2**—Scott Anthony; **3**—The Surgeon; **4**—Golden Phoenix; **5**—Ramblin' Rich; **6**—Rip Sawyer; **7**—Vinnie Young; **8**—Agent Orange; **9**—Rasta the Voodoo Mon; **10**—"Exotic" Adrian Hall.

WWC: WWC Universal champion—Ron Garvin; **1**—Dick Murdoch; **2**—Carlos Colon; **3**—Miguel Perez Jr; **4**—Dick Slater; **5**—Invader I; **6**—Fidel Sierra; **7**—The Patriot; **8**—Ricky Santana; **9**—Roadblock; **10**—Alex Porteau.

RATINGS ANALYSIS

Every month, this column will tell fans how we go about rating over 200 wrestlers in 19 different categories. It is a behind-the-scenes look at the most important—and respected—ratings system in the sport. This column is vital reading for all wrestling fans.



Lex Luger

Wrestlers on the ratings. Usually in "Ratings Analysis," we explain why top grapplers are ranked in certain positions. We're taking a break from the norm in this issue to offer comments on the rating from the wrestlers *themselves.*

The idea for this began when we received an angry phone call from WCW World champion **Lex Luger**, who was miffed when he was informed that he had slipped to fourth (and at press time, *fifth*!) in our overall Top 10.

"This is ridiculous!" barked Luger over the phone lines. "The 'Package' is the most dominant World champion of modern times, but you've got me all the way behind **Rick Rude**, the U.S. champion! You idiots have a lot of explaining to do to justify this one."

Not really, Mr. Luger. The reason you slipped to fifth in this issue—after being ranked number-one from the December 1991 through April 1992 issues—had totally to do with your arrogance in not defending your title.

Luger had been a fighting champion until early-January, when it was announced that he'd be defending his title against **Sting** at SuperBrawl II on February 29. After that, Luger rarely defended his belt at all, making only brief interview appearances on television.

In that light, Luger, for the first time since winning the WCW belt, deserves only to be rated fifth—behind not only WWF World champion **Ric Flair**, but also Rude, Intercontinental champion **Roddy Piper**, and Sting. Luger himself—not us—is most responsible for sabotaging his reputation.

Others wrestlers who reacted strongly to our ratings this month:

Eddie Gilbert (Global TV champion): "At first, I was pretty miffed that I was ranked at number eight in the Top 10, but I've calmed down about it. Right now, I've got my hands full battling this **Dark Patriot** creep who's masquerading as the new North American champion, and that's what's really on my mind. The only thing that *really* bugs me is that he's ahead of me in the ratings. That won't last long once 'Hot Stuff' gets through with him."

Scott Steiner: "Right now, you've got Rick and me rated number three in the tag teams, and I guess that's fair. After all, Rick's still getting some shots at Rude, and we aren't teaming every night. But I can tell you that, as of now, our team is again our number-one priority. We'll be back at the top of the ratings before you know it. We're a much better team than any of the two ranked ahead of us—particularly **Arn Anderson** and **Bobby Eaton**."

Jerry Lynn: "To see my name ranked as number eight in the Global Wrestling Federation is a real thrill for me. I've worked hard in the PWA, and now that I've been the GWF light heavyweight champion, my goal is to work way up in the ratings—and I'll take on anyone, even the heavyweights, to get up to the top."

Tom Prichard

Tom Prichard: "An honor, a privilege, a great pleasure. To be able to pick up *PWI* and see that I made the Top 10 is justification that everything I've done to change my ways has paid off. The last time I was in the Top 10 was way back in the October 1991 issue. This time, I don't intend to leave for a long time. I'm on the verge of driving **Eric Embry** out of the USWA, but I think now I'll set my sights on **Kamala's** USWA title. I can beat that ugly slob, daddy!"

Buddy Rose: "A lot of wise guys out there wrote me off because I'm now up to 230 pounds [actually, Rose now weighs in at *399*!], but I'm back on track and firmly in the Pacific Northwest ratings. You editors put too much emphasis on body types, anyway. Soon, I'll be the PNW champ, and I'll be the prettiest guy in the Top 10!"

Tommy Dreamer: "A few months ago, I entered the ratings for IWCCW for the first time, and it was a real thrill. But I'm number four in the federation now, and that's even more important to me. It's one thing to make the ratings, but it's another thing to stay there. Consistency is what I'm looking for, and my monthly placement in the ratings gives me a good feeling. It's a good measurement of just how far I'm progressing."

So long for now! But we'll be back next month with new ratings and a new "Analysis." Send your queries or suggestions to: "Ratings Analysis," c/o *Pro Wrestling Illustrated,* Box 48, Rockville Centre, NY, 11571. □

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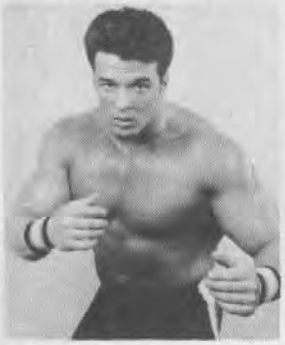
Scouting Report

A NO-HOLDS-BARRED LOOK AT WRESTLING'S TOP STARS

Every other month, *Pro Wrestling Illustrated* Scouting Reports will examine the relative strengths and weaknesses of wrestling's top stars. There will be no punches pulled as the sport's athletes undergo the harshest scrutiny anywhere in the wrestling world



MARCUS ALEXANDER BAGWELL

HOMETOWN: Marietta, GA
HEIGHT: 6'
WEIGHT: 240
YEARS AS PRO: 2
RATING: No. 10 in WCW

STRENGTHS:

- Youthful exuberance. Looks at WCW as his greatest opportunity—and it is.
- Knows limitations. Unlike most youngsters, doesn't overextend himself in the excitement of a match.
- Cradle suplex. First Race, then Hennig, now Bagwell.

WEAKNESSES:

- Too sportsmanlike. Rarely gets down and dirty, even when being fouled.
- Object of scorn. Friendship with Sting has drawn the ire of WCW rulebreakers—particularly The Dangerous Alliance.
- Peaks too early. Sometimes unleashes his finest maneuvers in a match's opening minutes.

OTHER COMMENTS: Began career in independent leagues in Georgia area before entering WCW in late-1991 . . . Now being guided by Dustin Rhodes, Sting, and Mike Graham . . . Multi-sports star and graduate of Sprayberry High School in Marietta, Georgia.

OUTLOOK FOR '92: Bagwell is already considered so important a star, he's been the focal point of a five-on-one attack by The Dangerous Alliance. It does appear that he needs a few more months of seasoning before he faces top-flight competition such as Larry Zbyszko, who's already beaten him several times.

SHAWN MICHAELS

HOMETOWN: San Antonio, TX
HEIGHT: 6'
WEIGHT: 220
YEARS AS PRO: 9
RATING: No. 10 in WWF

STRENGTHS:

- Nonpareil ability. Other than Hennig and Hart, the best all-around wrestler in the WWF.
- Shoulder mount into forward roll. It's like a junior Frankensteiner!
- Stamina. Sixteen-minute performance at Royal Rumble proved his conditioning.

WEAKNESSES:

- Singles inexperience. It's been tag teams for five years.
- Swollen head. Why such sudden, violent rancor? It's hard to figure.
- Smallish. No light heavyweight division in WWF works against him.

OTHER COMMENTS: A member of The Rockers—originally The Midnight Rockers—with Marty Jannetty since 1985, but no more . . . Pair parted ways after Michaels attacked Jannetty and threw him through Brutus Beefcake's "Barber Shop" window in December . . . Pair won AWA tag team title twice during '80s.

OUTLOOK FOR '92: Forget about Michaels' new, shockingly arrogant attitude. Pound-for-pound, this is one of the most dynamic and talented grapplers on the current scene. If he rapidly adjusts to singles competition, he should soon be a contender for the Intercontinental or WWF World title.

CHRIS WALKER

HOMETOWN: Atlanta, GA
HEIGHT: 6'1"
WEIGHT: 262
YEARS AS PRO: 2
RATING: unrated

STRENGTHS:

- Awesome leg power. Gets tremendous height on his dropkicks.
- Winning by losing. Not faring well against WWF veterans, but gaining needed experience.
- Skills honed properly. Entered WWF only after wrestling in Global and Georgia matches.

WEAKNESSES:

- Strength not a strength. Hasn't learned to use his musculature to full advantage.
- Can be fooled. Mistakes of youth are still disturbingly common, particularly against cagey veterans.
- Too crowd-oriented. Like Van Hammer, spends too much time having fun with his fans.

OTHER COMMENTS: It's been a slow and steady climb to prominence for this muscular sensation . . . Began career in the Georgia All-Star area, where he teamed often with Curtis Thompson . . . Moved to Global, where he captured the tag team title with Steve Simpson (1991) . . . Now struggling in the WWF.

OUTLOOK FOR '92: Walker, unlike most young wrestlers, is traveling the perfect track to success in the WWF. At this point, he's content to compete in opening matches, sometimes in smaller arenas, before making his national debut. That's the same thing The Ultimate Warrior did before gaining superstardom.

LARRY ZBYSZKO

HOMETOWN: Pittsburgh, PA
HEIGHT: 5'11"
WEIGHT: 248
YEARS AS PRO: 20
RATING: No. 9 in WCW

STRENGTHS:

- Versatile. From armbars to suplexes, the "Legend" knows it all.
- Master psych-out artist. Riles a crowd—and an opponent—as well as anyone.
- Fits in perfectly. Need a tag partner? Science or brawling? Call Larry.

WEAKNESSES:

- Obsession with Bruno Sammartino. Enough, already—it's been 12 years! Drop it!
- Not in Alliance title plans. "Cruncher" image not quite fitting for a former AWA World champion.
- Added weight. Gut is getting quite pronounced, and it's slowing him down.

OTHER COMMENTS: Began career as a protege of Bruno Sammartino in 1972 . . . Wrestled scientifically for years, then turned against his mentor in 1980 . . . Despised all over the country since . . . Former (and the final) AWA World champion captured the WCW World tag team title with Arn Anderson (1991).

OUTLOOK FOR '92: Zbyszko is now more than content to run constant interference for Dangerously's stable. Apparently, titles no longer mean much to the "Legend"—he's only concerned with Paul E.'s payoffs. Unfortunately, that probably means Zbyszko will cause many more injuries throughout the year.

AUSTIN IDOL

HOMETOWN: Las Vegas, NV
HEIGHT: 6'
WEIGHT: 250
YEARS AS PRO: 20
RATING: No. 8 in USWA

STRENGTHS:

- Part-time schedule. Strategically placed rest periods allow him to be at 100 percent at all times.
- Great body. Built for both speed and power.
- Figure-four. Applies the move faster than anyone, making it difficult to counter.

WEAKNESSES:

- Gypsy. Unwilling to commit to one league long enough to become a contender.
- Mercenary. Foresakes conventional career goals in lieu of instant payoffs from wrestlers seeking a "hit man."
- Tough-guy attitude. Takes five hard blows to score one, a dangerous mode of combat.

OTHER COMMENTS: Grizzled veteran has not lost a step . . . Former Southern champion competes sporadically these days; when he does, it's usually in the USWA . . . Long known as the "Universal Heartthrob" . . . On-again, off-again feud with Jerry Lawler is currently off.

OUTLOOK FOR '92: Idol's come-and-go career makes it hard to judge just how far he'll go during his current USWA stint. However, one constant about the "Universal Heartthrob" is that he usually ends up turning against Lawler—so "The King" has to be wary of Austin's ever-volatile personality.

TERRY GARVIN

HOMETOWN: San Francisco, CA
HEIGHT: 5'11"
WEIGHT: 220
YEARS AS PRO: 5
RATING: No. 6 in Global

STRENGTHS:

- New image. Now looks like a man—and wrestles like a *tough* man.
- In the right place. Perfectly suited for Global, where light heavyweights flourish.
- Learned. Former broadcasting stint helped him scout most GWF opponents.

WEAKNESSES:

- Loses composure. Fires all his guns when angered, and goes out of control.
- Weakened mobility. Burned right side (courtesy Eddie Gilbert) is still a bother.
- Naive. Trust Gilbert? We sure wouldn't!

OTHER COMMENTS: Broke into the sport as part of the Beauty & The Beast tag team with "Beast" Mark Gullen . . . Formerly managed by Buddy Roberts . . . Once considered effeminate, but no more . . . A former World Class color commentator . . . Came within inches of capturing Eddie Gilbert's GWF TV title in January.

OUTLOOK FOR '92: Garvin's far from the biggest wrestler in Global, but he's displayed a fighting heart bigger than any in the federation. Now that Gilbert is fighting with him instead of against him, perhaps the GWF tag team title is on the horizon for this sudden—though dubious—pairing.

Thumbs Down To The "Psycho Yuppie"

By Chris Bernucca

A COOL BREEZE wafts through the screen door that opens onto the terrace. From there, one can watch the sun set behind the Pacific Ocean. Five stories below, there is the endless rhythm of waves crashing on the shoreline.

For most people, this is paradise. For Sting, it is a rare day off at home.

Inside the condominium apartment, he lounges on a pastel-blue couch, watching television. He uses his remote to flip through 20 or 30 channels, looking for something to perk his interest. After a three-hour workout, he is on the verge of a nap.

Sting finds *Family Feud* and laughs to himself, setting down the remote. He is about to launch into a story about the time he and game-show host Ray Combs drove down to San Diego when the phone rings.

He excuses himself to take the call in his bedroom. There is no sound for about two minutes, then shouting. Sting returns to the living room, obviously flustered.

"You're not gonna believe this," he said, "but I think Paul E. Dangerously just offered to make me a millionaire if I joined forces

PAUL E. DANGEROUSLY'S MULTIMILLION-DOLLAR OFFER TO STING!

with The Dangerous Alliance."

Sting spoke softly, recalling the outrageous details.

"There was plenty of static and background noise," he explained, "which leads me to believe that the call was made from a cellular phone. I asked him how he got my number, but he wouldn't reply. The voice was deep and rigid, like Tom Brokaw on the nightly news. *Real* phony.

"There was some talk of contractual mumbo-jumbo, stuff like escalating salary, bonuses for championships and opponent eliminations, escape clauses. I mean, who else but a manager can recite that stuff off the top of their head?"

"I think Sting's brain has gone soft from all the beatings we've given him. He can't even tell the difference between a serious business proposition and a crank phone call."

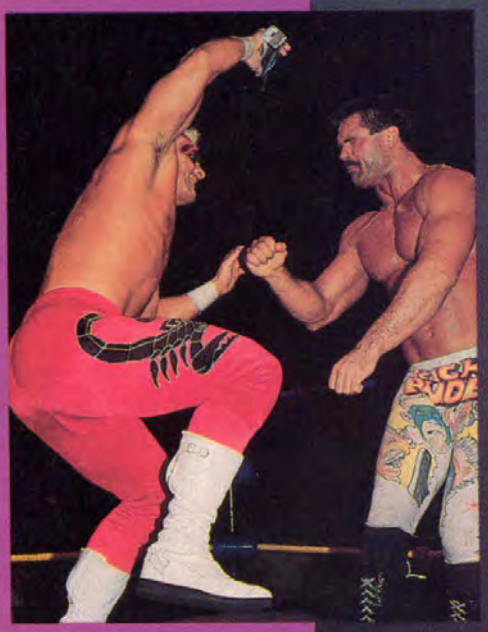
Sting gazed out the terrace door into the twilight.

"Then came the clincher," he continued. "He said, 'Don't be a fool. You can't beat us, so you might as well join us.' Who else could 'us' be?"

Imagine Michael Jordan in a Detroit Pistons uniform. Or the Hatfields and McCoys getting together for a Fourth of July picnic. Or Sean Penn mugging for the camera. That's how improbable the whole scenario is.

"I told him, 'There's nothing a laid-back Californian hates more than a psycho yuppie. I'll see you at SuperBrawl, punk.' "

Two days later, at the Civic Center in Philadelphia, Sting huddled with Rick and Scott Steiner, Rick Steamboat, Barry Windham, Dustin Rhodes, and Marcus Alexander Bagwell to silence the rumors. He assured them that he wasn't going anywhere, and that his only involvement with rulebreakers would be wrestling them.



Sting's hatred of the Alliance stems from his wars with Rick Rude (top) and Steve Austin (above).

"If Sting says they made him an offer, then they made him an offer," Bagwell said. "He's a man of his word. I'm just glad he turned it down, because it sounded like a pretty sweet deal."

Dangerously, on the other hand, was about as subtle as a car crash.

"Are you crazy?" he shouted when confronted with the accusation. He was in the dressing room, barely an hour before the card was to begin.

"I think Sting's brain has gone soft from all the beatings we've given him," Dangerously said. "He can't even tell the difference

Paul E. Dangerously denies using his phone to reach out and put the touch on Sting.

It's hard to imagine Sting and Rude as stablemates.

between a serious business proposition and a crank phone call. Some 11-year-old loser with a painted face probably made that call."

Denials aside, Dangerously has made it clear that he will stop at nothing to achieve his goal—a title monopoly in WCW. When "Beautiful" Bobby Eaton and Arn Anderson defeated Dustin Rhodes and Rick Steamboat to win the World tag team title in January, that left just two major titles unclaimed by The Dangerous Alliance—the U.S. tag team belts, and the coveted World championship.

Paul E. has had his sights on the World title ever since Clash of the Champions XVII, when he used World champion Lex Luger to attack Sting's knee. Dangerously continued to court Luger, joining him at ringside for his matches in England, until manager Harley Race warned Paul E. to "stay the hell away" from the champion.

At Clash XVIII in January, Sting signed to face Luger for the title at SuperBrawl II. With his access to the champion cut off, perhaps Dangerously chose the most obvious remaining avenue to the World title—the challenger.

"I was in a strategy meeting with the Alliance, as if it's any of your business," Paul E. snapped when asked of his whereabouts at the time of the phone call. "In fact, during the meeting we discussed Sting. Our plans are to *destroy* him, not sign him."

Sting and Arn Anderson were one-time stablemates in The Four Horsemen.

Dangerously admitted that he is always looking for additions to his stable. The success of the Alliance has also provided him with enough capital to make a multimillion-dollar offer to Sting. Paul E. also knows that the "Stinger" does have a brief history as a rulebreaker early in his career, when he was managed by Eddie Gilbert in the UWF.

Dangerously claimed the offer was nothing but a rumor started by Sting in an attempt to disrupt The Dangerous Alliance. But in his final denial, he said something that may have revealed his true intentions.

"You know, it's just like Sting to come up with a story like that," Paul E. said. "He has to do something to whip the fans into a frenzy. He's running out of ideas. He knows he can't beat us. Hell, he might as well join us."

You could almost hear the static on the phone. □

Spotlight

"ROWDY" RODDY PIPER

Roddy Piper showed absolutely no respect for The Mountie. He needed just over five minutes to put him to sleep and take the Intercontinental belt.

HE'S BEEN DESCRIBED as petulant, charismatic, violent, obnoxious, and above all, "Rowdy." But the only thing that can accurately be said about the phenomenal Roddy Piper is that he's ***totally*** *unpredictable.*

During the past 14 months, it's been harder than ever to keep track of the Scotsman, a 19-year veteran of the mat sport. When 1991 began, Piper had seemingly settled into semi-retirement, wrestling occasionally but prefering his commentating duties on the WWF's syndicated ***Superstars Of Wrestling*** *program. And after a pair of motorcycle mishaps, Piper hinted that he was close to hanging up his kilt—and his tights—for good.*

Then Ric Flair entered the WWF last fall. Goodbye, retirement—hello wrestling.

Piper's decision to make a full-scale comeback is one of the best decisions he's ever made. Still livid with the "Nature Boy" because of their mid-'80s feud, Piper took on Flair in hard-fought matches, at times beating the seven-time former NWA/WCW World champion by countout.

But Piper's crowning achievement was yet to come.

Piper was given a shot at Intercontinental champion The Mountie when Bret Hart was forced out of his match at the Royal Rumble on January 19 in Albany, New York. It took the determined Piper less than six minutes to crush the Canadian in one of the most one-sided title matches in WWF history. After eight years in the federation, Piper had finally captured his first championship.

Apparently, even that's not enough. In an exclusive conversation with Senior Editor Bill Apter, Piper, as outspoken as ever, tells about his plans for the future—which definitely include the WWF World title, now in the possession of his old rival, Ric Flair.

BILL APTER: Roddy, thanks for speaking with me today. You certainly made sure The Mountie's I-C title reign was short-lived—two days!

RODDY PIPER: ***Anytime*** **they have to fight Roddy Riper, their career's gonna be short-lived.**

APTER: Mountie beat Bret Hart in Springfield, Massachusetts, on a Friday night, but you got your championship match just two days later at the Rumble. How'd you manage that?

PIPER: **I happened to be in Springfield. After I had showered down, I was watching the match with Bret Hart and The Mountie. I saw The Mountie beat Hart, and after he beat him he started kicking and taking advantage of the guy. So I came down to ringside. I jumped in the ring, and I told him to get out. I thought that Hart had had enough. I was not trying to be Mister Good Dooby. It was just a gut thing that I did. And the next thing I knew, Mountie nailed me and ran away. "Macho Man" was there and Sid Justice was there, but none of those guys got attacked. I came out there, I think that made me get the shot—from WWF President Jack Tunney—because I'm considered a contender any time I want to be because of my track record.**

Every issue, reporters from PRO WRESTLING ILLUSTRATED will participate in an incisive press conference with a top wrestling star. The questions will be demanding. And the answers will reveal the innermost thoughts of the giants of the sport.

APTER: That's why you got the shot?

PIPER: **Plus I said, "Hey, gimme this idiot. Gimme this joker." Because if this guy is going to put 10 pounds of metal upside my head, obviously he wants to fight. Justice? He ain't done a doggone thing in the WWF other than fight three middlweights, get a torn bicep, go to the doctor and get it all fixed up. You know, my right rotator cuff is torn, my left wrist is broken. But *I'm* fightin' and winnin'. I don't think Justice even matters right now. Savage? "Macho Man" retired, he got married, he's been inactive. Then he came back when Jake Roberts so viciously attacked him and his wife. He's obviously got his hands full. I don't think he wanted any part of The Mountie.**

APTER: What about Hulk Hogan?

PIPER: **Hogan at that particular time was concentrating on the Royal Rumble.**

APTER: What about Hart?

PIPER: **Bret Hart was not even there.**

APTER: Was he still too ill to take a rematch that soon?

PIPER: **Bret Hart says he was sick before he went in the ring.** ***(Mock whining)*** **"Oh, I'm sick! I don't feel good! My tum-tum hurts!" A long time ago, there was this guy—was it Thomas Hearns?—he hurt his little finger and he couldn't box Marvin Hagler. C'mon! So you're sick, so you got a little temperature. Get in there and fight!**

APTER: Have you wrestled with a 104-degree fever, as they say

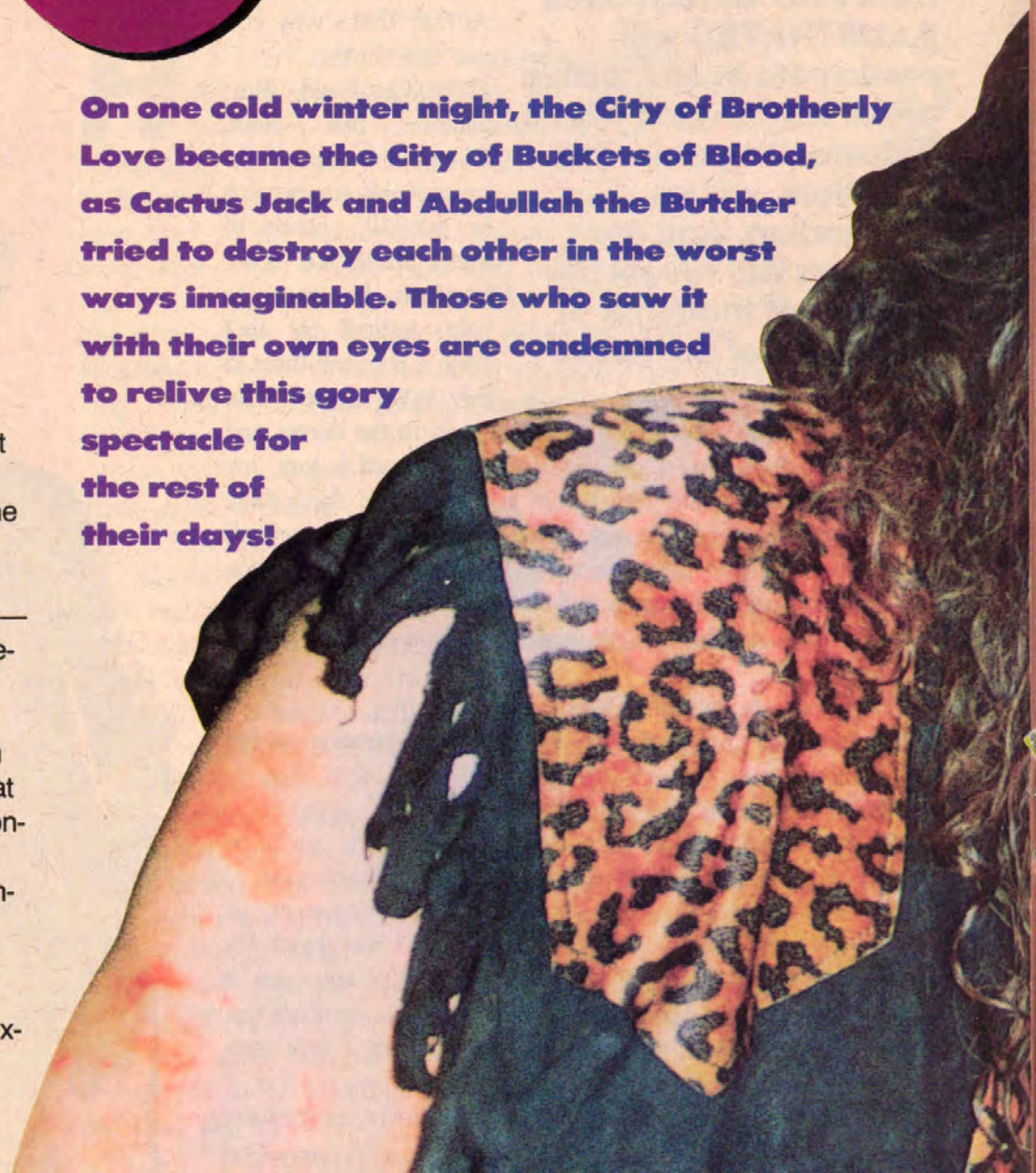
(Continued on page 54)

"I've been probably, pound for pound, the toughest guy ever in professional wrestling."

ABDULLAH THE BUTCHER VS. CACTUS JACK:

SUNDAY

On one cold winter night, the City of Brotherly Love became the City of Buckets of Blood, as Cactus Jack and Abdullah the Butcher tried to destroy each other in the worst ways imaginable. Those who saw it with their own eyes are condemned to relive this gory spectacle for the rest of their days!



CACTUS JACK'S bloodlust is becoming legendary in WCW circles. Abdullah the Butcher's already is.

There are not two men in the rest of WCW—or the entire sport—so intent on turning any match between them into one huge horror movie. They put their veins and capillaries at risk almost as much as their bones and muscles. What others consider high-risk, they consider routine.

On February 2 at the Civic Center in Philadelphia, these two bloodhounds were locked—as they should be—in a steel cage. Almost every fan in attendance expected plasma to flow, and flow freely.

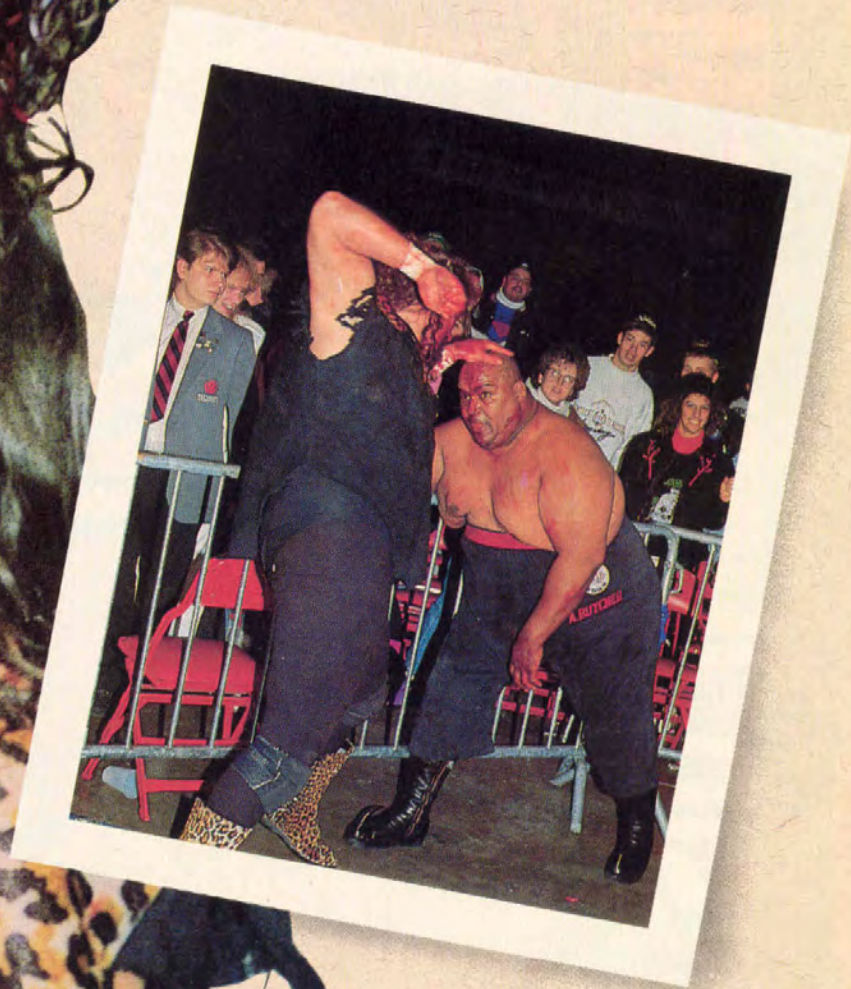
(Continued on page 52)

DAY

BLOODY SUNDAY!

By Andy Rodriguez

Photos by Bill Apter & Craig Peters



SID JUSTICE'S MASTER PLAN:

HOW HE DUPED HULK HOGAN— AND YOU!

Early in the Royal Rumble, Sid Justice and Hulk Hogan teamed up on several occasions (above). But the bout climaxed with Justice betraying Hogan and eliminating him (far left).

He came . . . he saw . . . he stabbed him in the back. That's the way millions of eyewitnesses describe what Sid Justice did to Hulk Hogan. Justice is as Vicious as ever

By Andy Rodriguez

THEIR FRIENDSHIP SENT fear through the camps of every WWF rulebreaker. Their alliance threatened to destroy the delicate balance of power in the federation. Of this joint venture between Hulk Hogan and Sid Justice, one wrestler, a man of fearless reputation who insisted on anonymity, complained, "It's not fair to the rest of us."

Not fair to the rest of us, like having the two strongest fighters on the same side in a schoolyard brawl. Except in *this* schoolyard, careers and millions of dollars hung in the balance.

For fans, the new tag team of Hogan and Justice was a dream come true. In choosing Justice, Hogan appeared to picking not just a tag team partner—he seemed to be selecting a successor to Hulkamania itself.

"Sid Justice," Hogan seemed to be assuring, "is big and strong enough, and of sufficient character to carry this federation and each of you little Hulkamaniacs on his back after I retire."

The fans ate it up. Imagine! A crusader in the very mold of the "Hulkster" himself. Why just look at his name—Justice! It was too good to be true.

And it was.

As we all know by now, it is Sid Justice's devout intention to replace Hulk Hogan—by littering the wrestling landscape with bits and pieces of Hogan's flesh and bones. By wrestling standards, this incident of betrayal was fairly typical. During a tag team match against Ric Flair and The Undertaker, Justice abandoned Hogan, allowing Flair and Justice to ready, aim, and fire blows at Hogan at will.

To Hogan, it was his worst nightmare revisited. How many times in the past had Hogan been duped by

Justice entered the Royal Rumble with one goal in mind—to overcome 29 men and become WWF World champion. He came very close to realizing his goal, as he and Ric Flair were the last two men in the ring.

his "friends"? Paul Orndorff. Andre the Giant. Tugboat. Randy Savage. The list is endless. This time, according to WWF sources, hurt the most.

"There's no comparison to the others," said one source close to Hogan. "Hulk is deeply hurt by Sid's actions. He had put a lot of time and energy and faith in Justice. He thought he had found a common voice."

It didn't take long for Justice to voice his disapproval. For the first five minutes of the match against Flair and Undertaker, all went well. After Hogan took a vicious forearm from Undertaker, he looked to his partner for relief. At first, Justice stood silently by, watching as Hogan withstood a brutal assault. Then, when it became clear Hogan needed help, Justice turned his back—a clear symbol of the contempt he has for Hogan and his values.

It is reported that after the match, after Hogan raged about the interview area, he retired to his dressing room and didn't exit for more than two hours. Rumors abound that he spent much of that time in tears—tears of humiliation, not physical pain. Justice's actions—even after the finish of the Royal Rumble—were very unexpected.

According to Senior Writer Eddie Ellner, it shouldn't have been.

"It's a measure of Hogan's ego that he thought everything was okay between him and Justice," Ellner said. "In interviews before their conflict, Hogan did all the talking, often cutting Justice off before he could say anything. A lot of wrestlers are content letting Hogan hog the spotlight. It's just that Justice isn't one of them. It was fairly obvious that Justice was unhappy."

The two wrestlers had publicly argued—almost coming to blows—after the Rumble. Hogan took issue that Justice had dumped him over the top rope, and berated Justice from outside the ring. This allowed Ric Flair to surprise Justice and deposit him over the top rope to win the WWF title.

Justice was incensed by Hogan's tactics. He felt if Hogan had a problem, then he should have taken it up with him in the dressing room, behind closed doors.

According to one man who knew Justice in the past, Justice doesn't

Justice declared he doesn't need help from anyone to become WWF World champion.

like to be shown up in public.

"In a battle royal, it's every man for himself," said Big John Studd, the winner of the inaugural Royal Rumble, in 1989. "Sid couldn't understand why Hogan was upset at him personally. He felt he should have taken the elimination like a man. As volatile as Sid, is, that's all was needed to set him off."

"Hogan insists on ruling his kingdom according to his rules and his rules alone," said Ellner. "He considered what Justice did to him at the Rumble an act of treason. There were three men left in the ring? What should Justice have done? Ask him to square dance?"

The answer was supplied loud and clear by Justice in a post—*Saturday Night's Main Event* interview.

"I don't need Hulk Hogan," Justice screamed. "I don't need anyone but myself!"

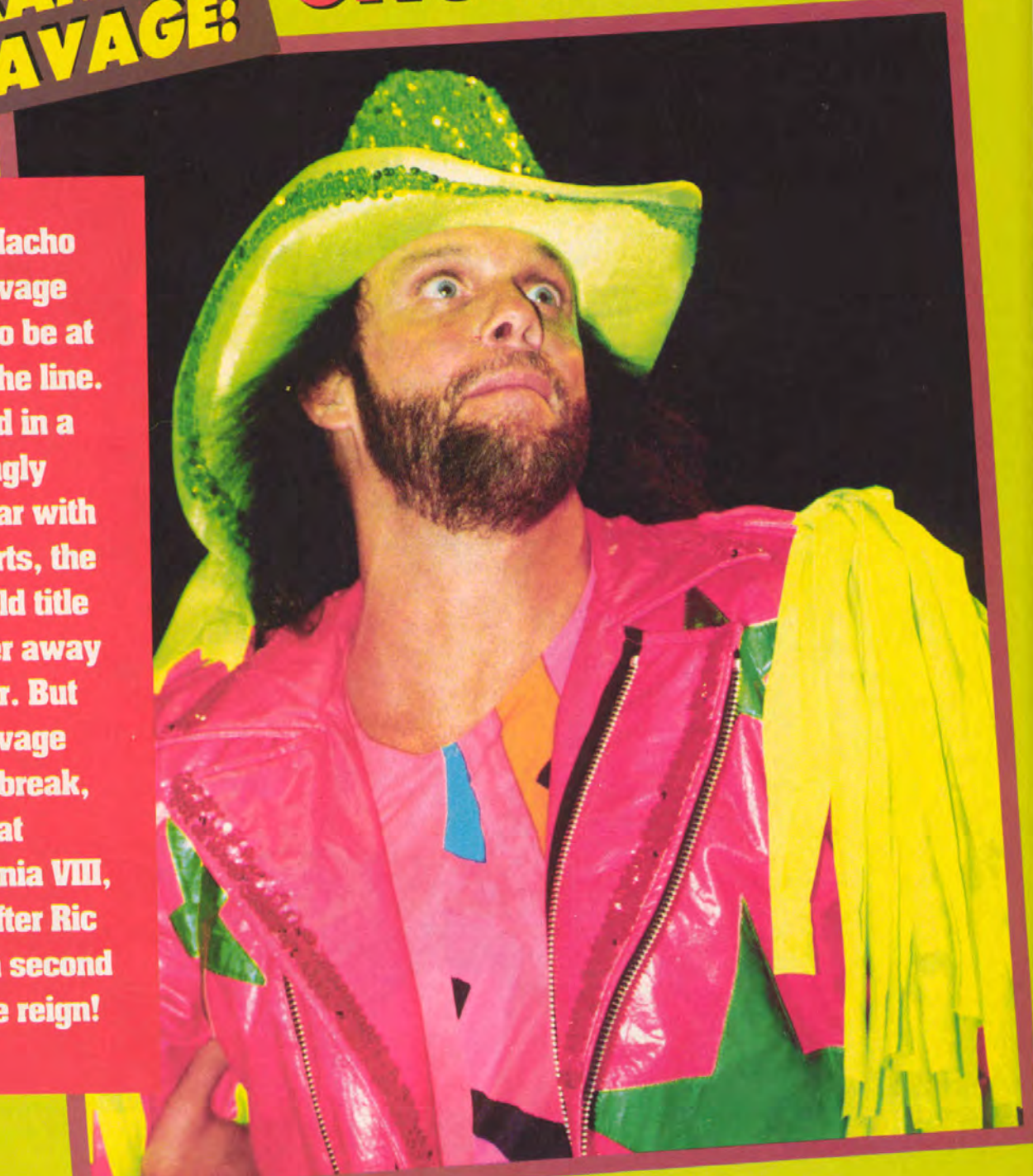
Perhaps fans who are upset that their "dream team" never materialized should listen to the words of one relieved wrestler, who, after the ill-fated tag team match was over, wondered aloud:

"Hey, haven't you always wondered what it would be like for Superman to fight himself? Now we'll get the chance to see it!" □

Justice has tried to come off as a fan favorite, but is developing quite a reputation as a barbarian. In WCW in 1990, he engaged in violent wars against Lex Luger.

ANOTHER WWF TITLE

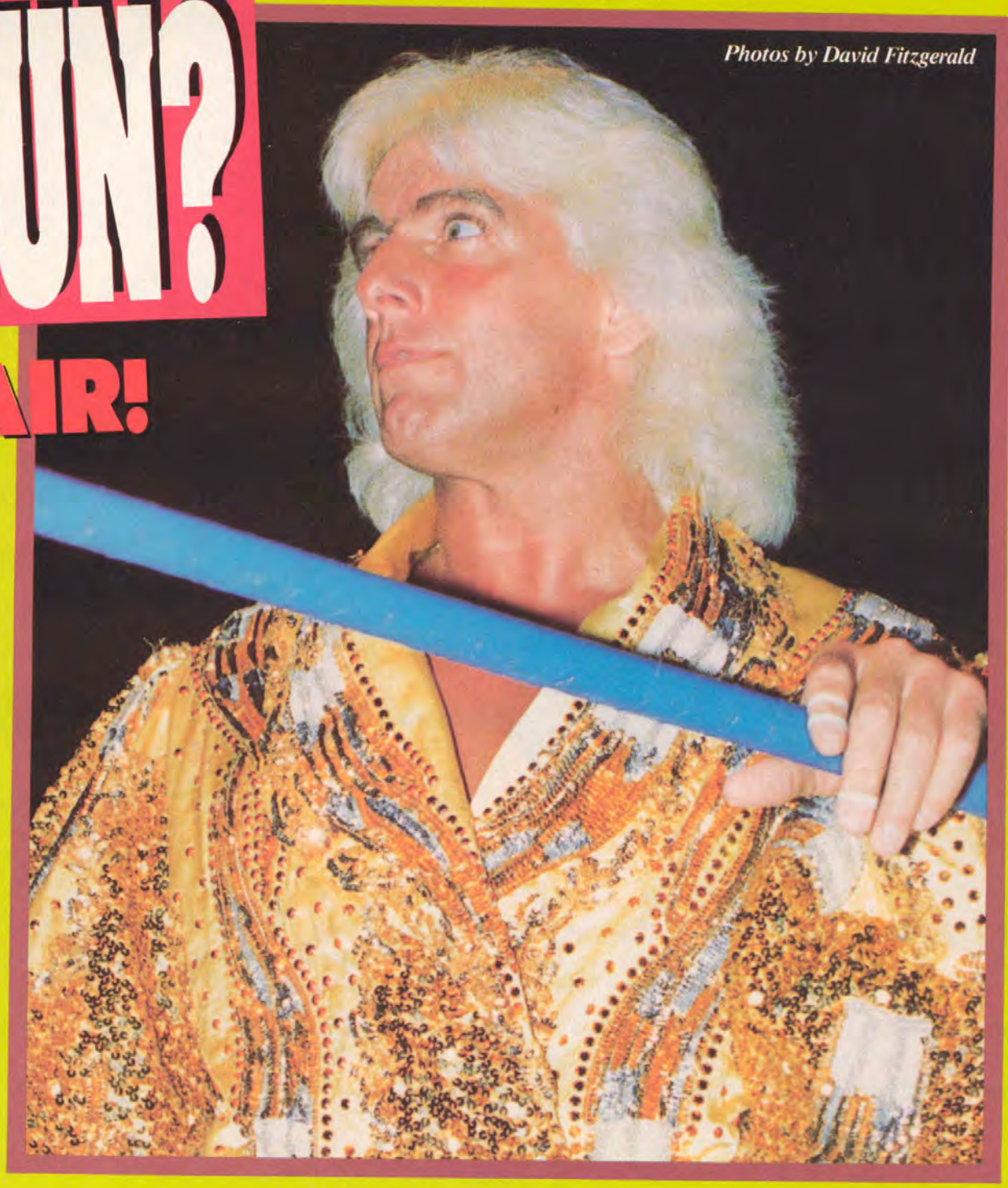
RANDY SAVAGE: ONCE MORE—WITH



Randy "Macho Man" Savage appeared to be at the end of the line. Embroiled in a seemingly endless war with Jake Roberts, the WWF World title was further away than ever. But then Savage caught a break, and at WrestleMania VIII, he'll go after Ric Flair and a second World title reign!

E RUN?

H FLAIR!



Photos by David Fitzgerald

By David Rosenbaum

EVERYWHERE HE TURNED there were detours. He looked one way and found he didn't have any friends. He looked another way and found the line was too long.

A third way found an enemy disguised as a friend. A fourth way was a road to nowhere and the fifth way led down the wedding aisle.

Gaining any momentum seemed impossible because he was always being slowed down and told to find another route. Then, finally, he discovered he was trapped in a maze, and the only route leading out just happened to be pointed to where he wanted to go.

Years have passed since Randy "Macho Man" Savage last found a direct path to *anywhere*. In 1988, he won the WWF World title tournament at WrestleMania IV. One year later, after losing the title to Hulk Hogan at WrestleMania V, Savage started on his road to nowhere.

But now all the signs are pointing in the right direction. On April 5 at WrestleMania VIII at the Hoosier Dome in Indianapolis, Indiana, Savage will once again go after the World title. This time his opponent will be Ric Flair: "Macho Man" vs. "Nature Boy" for the gold!

And to think that just months ago he was fighting a lifetime suspension from the WWF for dropping a loser-must-retire match to Ultimate Warrior at WrestleMania VII. Just months ago, we lamented that marrying Elizabeth robbed Savage of his

The highlight of Randy Savage's career came at Wrestlemania IV, when he won a tournament for the WWF World title. Savage defeated Ted DiBiase in the final (left), then was joined by Elizabeth in a salute to the fans (right).

killer instinct and drive.

Were we wrong! All it took was a sniff of the belt and Savage was back in top form, ready to make another run at the World title and give it everything he had. Jake Roberts found that out the hard way.

At the Survivor Series on Thanksgiving eve, Roberts delivered the ultimate insult to Savage when he slapped Elizabeth's face. Savage was irate and vowed revenge, but for over a month, Roberts retained the upper hand in their feud.

It was mind-boggling. Revenge had always been Savage's strong suit. The murderous gaze that often filled his eyes was enough to drive any wrestler out of the federation. But the look was gone and Savage was helpless to avenge the dishonor done to his beautiful bride.

Then Savage caught a break that stirred something inside of him: Flair won the World title at the Royal Rumble and Hogan began his feud with former friend Sid Justice. When wrestlers started jockeying for WrestleMania matchups, Hogan decided to go after Justice instead of the title. That left an opening that Savage grabbed.

"Suddenly, there was a spark in Savage's eye," WWF expert Thomas Pilliard said. "WrestleMania had always been Hogan's show and everybody expected a Hogan-Flair rematch at WrestleMania VIII, but then it didn't happen. Now Savage had something *big* to shoot for."

Revenge on Roberts then came easily. Savage started wiping the mat with Roberts. The fans, cheering wildly, could feel his momentum building. After nearly a year, the *real* "Macho Man" was back. Then the Flair match was signed and Savage had his chance at a second World title reign.

Despite his talents, Savage is a longshot. Flair, a seven-time former NWA/WCW World champion, would have been a slight favorite over Hogan. He is at least a 2-1 favorite over Savage.

On his side, Flair has experience in title matches, outstanding ring workmanship, a thorough knowledge of scientific wrestling, and the desire to go down in history as the sport's greatest champion ever. On his side, Savage has fine aerial skills, a dangerous killer

Savage had Ric Flair on the ropes at the Royal Rumble in January but could not put him away. At WrestleMania VIII, the "Macho Man" won't have the help of other wrestlers when he faces the World champion.

instinct, and the fans.

But is Savage in peak form? Beating Roberts is one thing. Beating Flair is another. It's like the difference between beating the New York Knicks and the Chicago Bulls. One task is far easier than the other.

Flair won the title with the greatest performance in Rumble history. He lasted more than 60 minutes and eliminated some of the best wrestlers in the federation. For the first time, he has the WrestleMania spotlight. This is where Hogan achieved greatness. Flair is ready to steal the spotlight.

Savage does not have a great WrestleMania history. Sure, he won the World title at WrestleMania IV, but that was thanks to Hogan's interference. He lost the title at WrestleMania V.

He also lost the Intercontinental title to Rick Steamboat at WrestleMania III and lost the loser-must-retire match at WrestleMania VII. So Savage's greatest win came at WrestleMania—but so did some of his worst losses.

Most of the signs point to Flair. One important sign points to Savage.

Savage was out of the ring for over six months, a time during which prior injuries had a chance to heal and Savage had the chance to refuel emotionally. Marrying Elizabeth was an exciting and important time in his life. Now he and Elizabeth are settling into marriage. The transition from single to married life has been made.

Savage has started a new chapter in his life. He has made mistakes and is now ready to show how he has learned from those mistakes.

The "Macho Man" has renewal on his side. It could be enough—more than enough—to put him at the very top again. □

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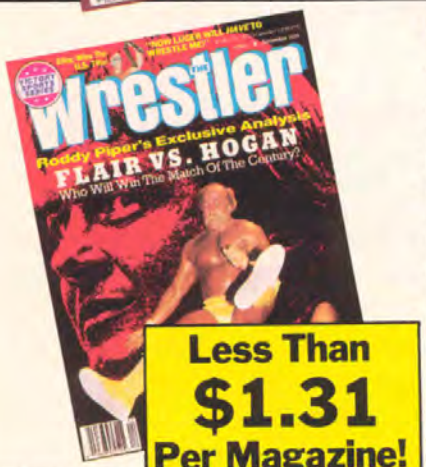

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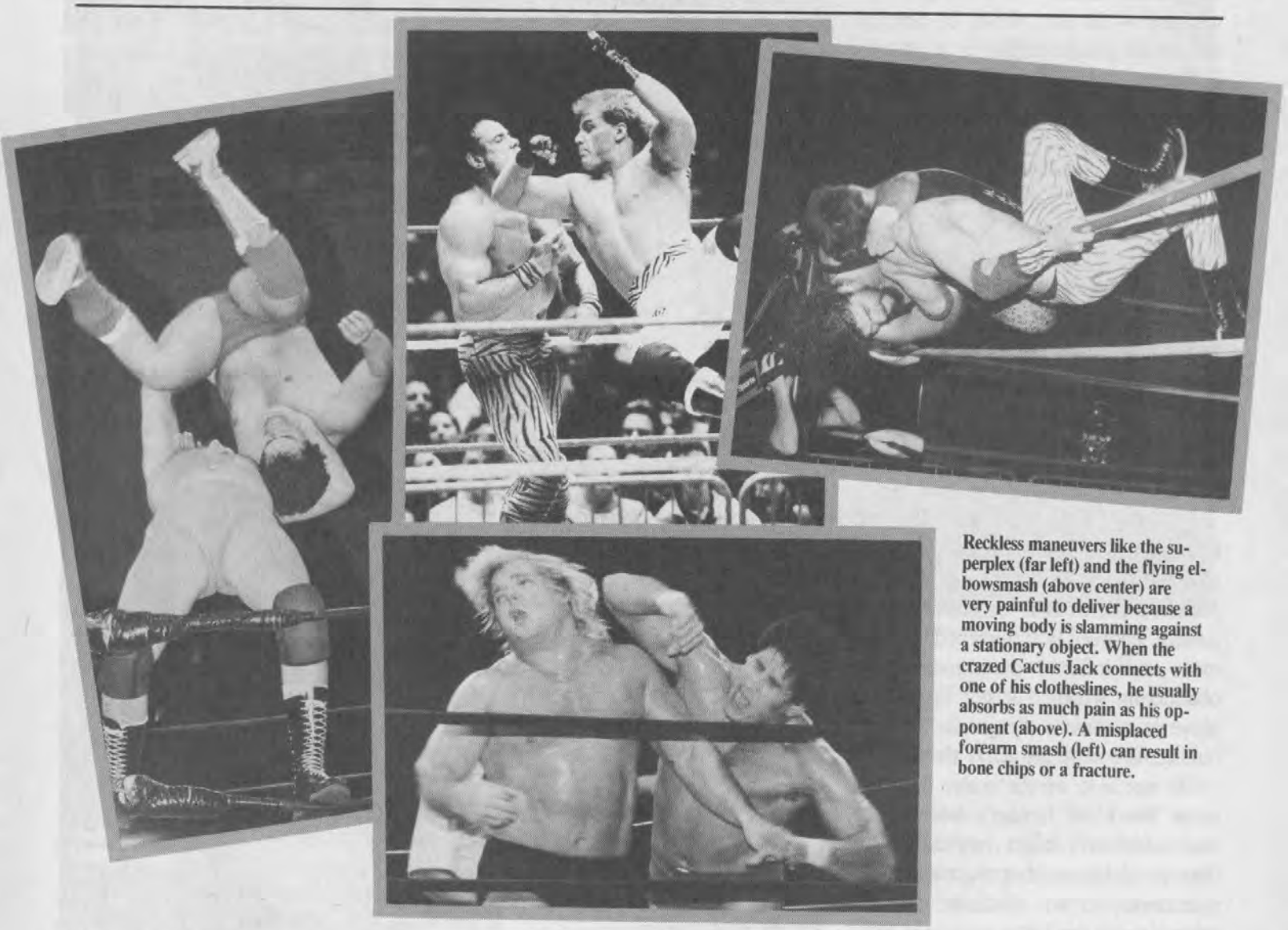
THE PAIN OF INFLICTING PAIN

The punishment a wrestler absorbs in the ring is more than you might have imagined. In fact, every move a wrestler executes takes its toll on two people: the opponent and the wrestler himself!



Reckless maneuvers like the superplex (far left) and the flying elbowsmash (above center) are very painful to deliver because a moving body is slamming against a stationary object. When the crazed Cactus Jack connects with one of his clotheslines, he usually absorbs as much pain as his opponent (above). A misplaced forearm smash (left) can result in bone chips or a fracture.

By Craig Peters

NO MATTER HOW much professional wrestlers would like to, there is no repealing Newton's third law of motion: For every action, there is an equal and opposite reaction.

Put in more practical wrestling terms: For every wrestling maneuver that inflicts punishment, there is an equal and opposite amount of punishment that must be dealt with.

Still confused? Let's look at an example.

The forearm smash is a move that, like the jab in boxing, can cause a quick stinging effect to one's opponent. When wrestler A executes the move on wrestler B, wrestler B (assuming the move is executed properly) absorbs a punishing blow. But let's not forget about wrestler A: His forearm makes contact with wrestler B's shoulder, jaw, or face. And depending on the type of contact made, wrestler A could, in fact, suffer almost as much damage as wrestler B!

So why don't wrestlers who execute forearm smashes often wind up with broken arms?

"A lot of it has to do with the fact that you have the momentum of the entire body channeled through the

arm," said former WWF and NWA World champion Buddy Rogers, a keen student of the game. "When properly executed, the forearm smash is more like a forearm roll; the impact is distributed *along* the arm of the man doing the move, but concentrated in one spot on the man's opponent.

"It also has to do with the arm being a muscular limb, as opposed to the face being a very vulnerable area," Rogers continued. "As such, the musculature of the arm, flexed or clenched to provide greater authority at impact, is better equipped to absorb punishment; a man's face, particularly when he isn't expecting the move, is an incredibly vulnerable target."

A move as simple as the forearm smash, then, is hardly as simple as it seems.

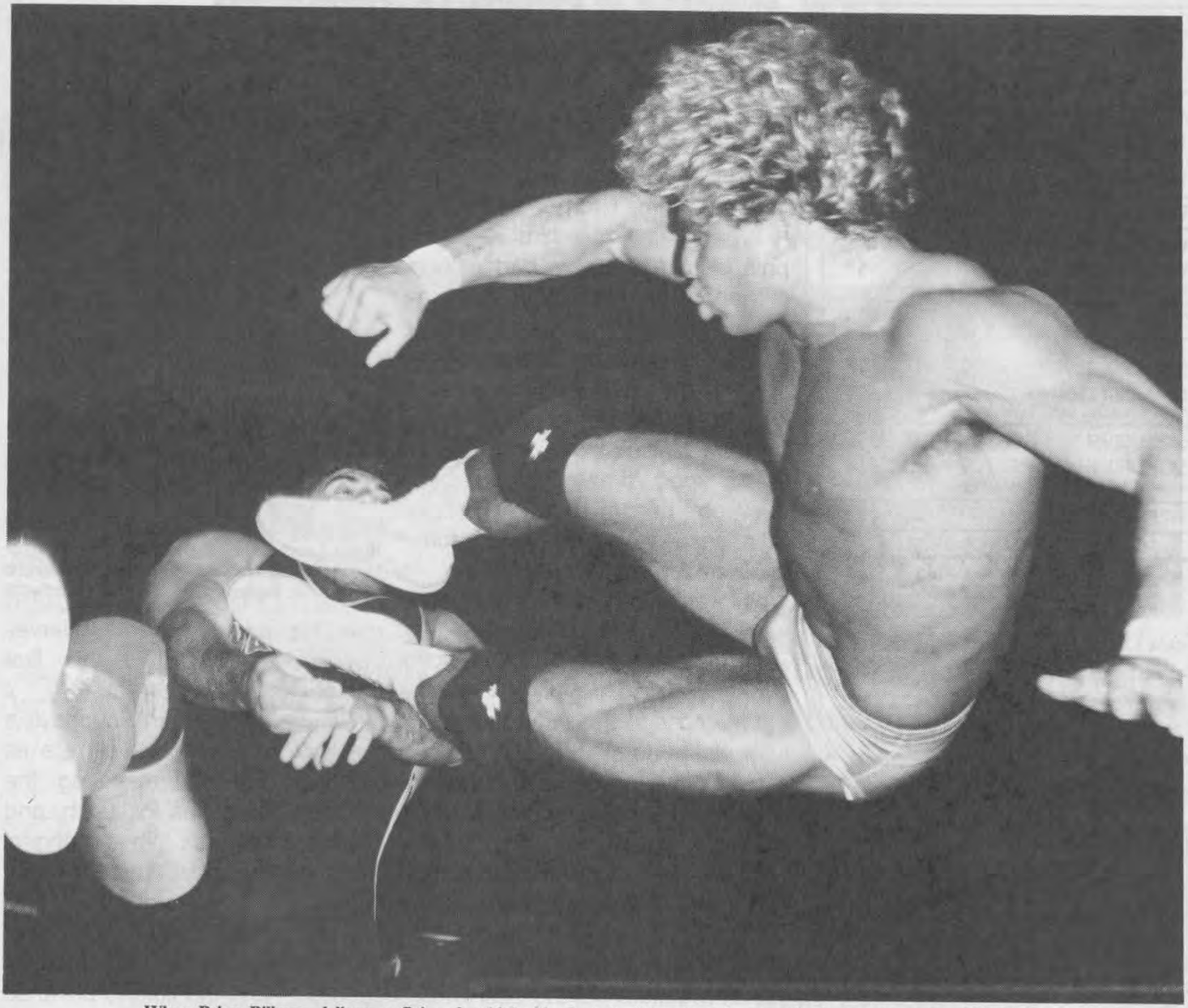
"Every successful pro trains very seriously along the lines that he knows he is going to absorb a lot of punishment in the course of a match," said veteran commentator Gordon Solie, who has been an analyst of the sport since the late-'50s. "The more punishment a man can take, the more he can dish out.

"In fact," Solie explained, "I've had it explained to me by a few analytical veterans that one way some pros approach a match is to consider the difference between self-absorbed punishment and inflicted punishment when considering whether or not to make a move in a match; the greater the difference, the more attractive the move."

On one side of the scale, there's a move like Hulk Hogan's boot to the face, which will inflict very little punishment to Hogan, but a great deal of punishment to his opponent. On the other side of the scale, you have Cactus Jack, who hurtles himself over the top rope along with his opponent while executing the clothesline.

"Jack, of course, is an extreme case," said WCW commentator Jim Ross. "He actually *likes* the punishment he feels when he goes flying over the ropes. The thing with Jack is that his opponent doesn't like it very much, so there's the difference in pain absorption, and one of the main reasons

Many wrestlers have gone from the powerful sitdown piledriver (above) to the less forceful knees-front piledriver (below) in order to limit the amount of potential damage to their own spinal columns.



When Brian Pillman delivers a flying dropkick, his drop to the canvas is normally just as severe as that of his opponent. The difference is that Pillman isn't the one being kicked in the chest or face.

Jack has been so successful."

Another factor to consider when thinking about how much pain a wrestler absorbs in the ring from the moves he executes is the body type of the wrestler himself. A wrestler with strong gluteus muscles, for example, will be able to absorb the impact that his body experiences when executing a sitdown piledriver.

"Right there, you've hit upon a major reason why wrestlers are switching from the sitdown piledriver to the knees-front piledriver," Solie explained. "Wrestlers who were utilizing the piledriver in their matches were absorbing a significant amount of punishment to their spinal columns; unnecessary punishment when you consider that the same impact to the opponent can be made with a drop to the knees rather than a drop to the behind. And the impact absorbed by the man executing the maneuver, rather than being concentrated along the spine, is distributed along the knees and shins."

And yet another factor to think about is timing: When do you use a move that might hurt you almost as much as it hurts your opponent?

"I use my good ol' 'tutti-frutti' knockout punch as a finisher rather than as a mid-match weapon for two reasons," said Johnny B. Badd, who had an extensive amateur boxing career before turning to the pro mat. "First of all, it does the job every time! But it also stings my hand some, so I wait until the right time when I *know* it can finish off my man. I don't want to wrestle half a match with a sore hand, especially if I have to follow up with an armdrag or a flying bodypress."

"In a way, it's not unlike a video game," Ross said, "in which each wrestler begins a match with X amount of strength. Any move executed will sap strength both from himself and from his opponent. The trick, though, is to use moves that sap your opponent's power far more than your own—and to do so quickly enough that you won't have to be hurt too much in the process!"

So the next time you're watching a match, think about Newton's third law of motion—and understand that the hard-earned victory your favorite wrestler just scored is a lot more deserved than you previously thought. □

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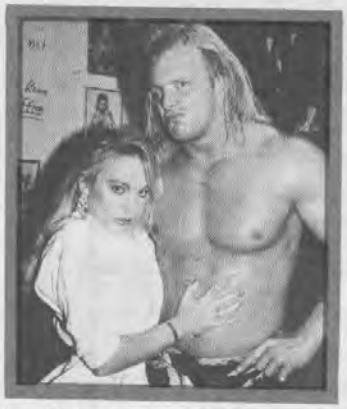

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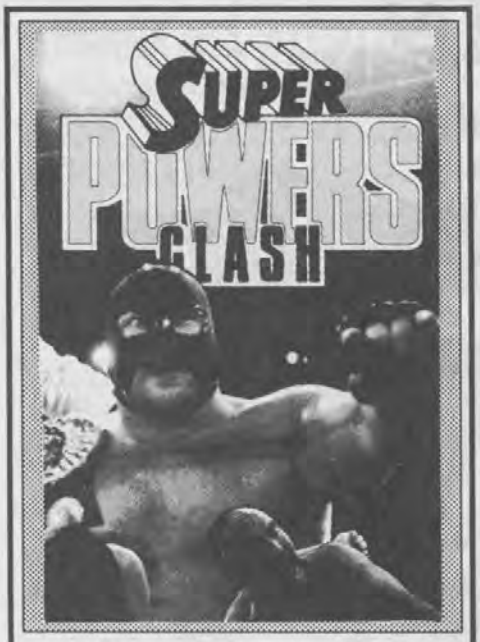

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BETWEEN FALLS

(Continued from page 7)

planation. I have to ask, though, why your publication discriminates against the WWF.

It is ludicrous to constantly refer to the WWF as a circus act and not criticize WCW. Sure, wrestlers like Irwin R. Schyster, Repo Man, Berzerker, and Skinner are quite moronic, but their stupidity pales in comparison to WCW wrestlers such as Vinnie Vegas, Arachnaman, Johnny B. Badd, Big Josh, and "Diamond" Dallas Page.

One other thing—stop Hogan-bashing. Without him, I assure you that you would be selling a lot fewer magazines than you are now.

JOHN ROBICHAUX
New Orleans

☎ DREAM TEAM

When I read that Paul E. Dangerously was breaking up Larry Zbyszko and Arn Anderson and replacing Zbyszko with "Beautiful" Bobby Eaton ("Even Paul E.'s Critics Admit: The Eaton-Anderson Alliance Was A Masterstroke," April 1992), I thought the "pyscho yuppie" was dropping the "yuppie" part.

Then I went to a WCW card at the Jacksonville Coliseum and watched Eaton and Anderson wrest the belts from Dustin Rhodes and Rick Steamboat. As much as I hate The Dangerous Alliance, these two competitors make an impressive team. And with ringside help from Zbyszko, Madusa, and Paul E. himself, they should be champions for a long time.

FRED TRYSON
Orlando, FL

THANKS, JOEL

On January 18 at 9 a.m., the wrestling fans of New Jersey,

When Paul E. Dangerously paired Bobby Eaton with Arn Anderson, some fans were surprised. But after watching them win the WCW World tag team title, reader Fred Tryson was impressed.

Pennsylvania, and Delaware, turned on "Rasslin' Radio" for the last time. During that show, host Joel Goodhart announced the termination of his Tri-State Wrestling Alliance.

Goodhart will go down in history as one of the best promoters the sport has ever seen. For the past two years, the TWA presented cards that fans couldn't get enough of.

This is for Joel: If you decide to come back to this great sport, I'm sure anyone who ever saw a TWA card would welcome you back with open arms. You'll surely be missed. Thanks, Joel, for all the great wrestling action you gave us. You wrestled, you brawled, and you did it all!

JOHN STADVEC
Roebling, NJ

SELECTION PROCESS

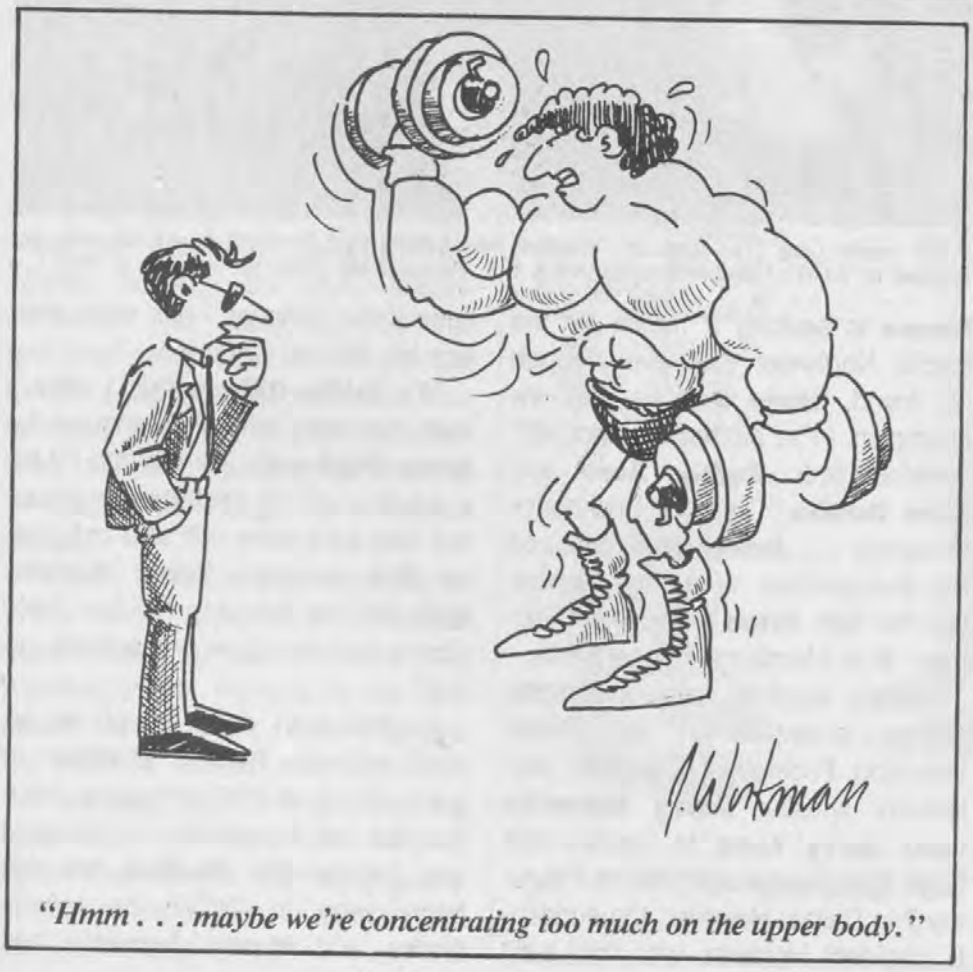
I could not agree more with the selection of Fabulous Moolah for the Editors' Award for 1991 (March 1992). I can recall when Moolah was known as Slave Girl Moolah, one of wrestling's first valets, for the wild-haired Elephant Boy back in the 1950s.

Fabulous Moolah's stronghold on the title was even more powerful than this headlock on Linda Carroll. Moolah was the women's world champion for 28 years and a worthy choice for the 1991 Editors' Award, says reader Richard Evans.

Truly, Moolah is a one-person dynasty. Her 28 straight years as women's world champion attest to this. Although I have never had the privilege of seeing Moolah wrestle in person, the article disclosed something I always suspected. Beneath that tough, crusty wrestling exterior lies a compassionate, caring lady with an excellent sense of humor.

Moolah, may you remain as eternal as your unequalled championship reign.

RICHARD EVANS
Gulfport, MS□



"Hmm . . . maybe we're concentrating too much on the upper body."

(Continued from page 8)

tine, who has decided to return to WCW for the first time in years. "The Hammer" has been telling confidants that he's had his sights set on the U.S. belt, which he held in the NWA before entering the WWF. To get it, he'll have to get past tough **Rick Rude**, with whom he almost feuded in the UWF before deciding to stay in the WWF last year.

Kamala regained the held-up USWA title by beating top contender **Koko B. Ware** on February 10 in Memphis. It's the Ugandan's third run as champion . . . **Brickhouse Brown** is seeking a match for the Pacific Northwest title—even though his friend, **Steve Doll**, is the new champion. "I've earned my shot with victories over **Buddy Rose** and **John Rambo**," popular Brickhouse reasoned . . . **Jimmy Deo** captured the Independent Wrestling Association title from **Brian Bowser** on February 8 in Hamburg, Pennsylvania.

There's another new—and highly unlikely—champion in the Global Wrestling Federation. Longtime preliminary wrestler **Barry Horowitz** upset **Jerry Lynn** to capture the GWF light heavyweight title on February 7 in Dallas. However, the suddenly confident Horowitz, who now calls himself the "Winner," has more than just his title on his mind.

"It's **Eddie Gilbert** that I want," said Horowitz, who is managed by **Bruce Prichard**. "He told me I'd be a member of his rulebreaking group, but now he's gone soft and befriended that sissy-boy **Terry Garvin**. Well, I'm not following his line. He's gonna pay for turning his back on me!"

Another man once thought of an underachiever, **Italian Stallion**, is going strong as PWF champion. He's held the belt for months . . . Comings and goings: **Mr. Hughes** has not been seen in WCW for several weeks, and **Marty Jannetty** has

WWF veteran Greg "The Hammer" Valentine, here battling Paul Orndorff on a UWF card, has returned to WCW. Valentine held the NWA U.S. championship twice, the last time in 1983.

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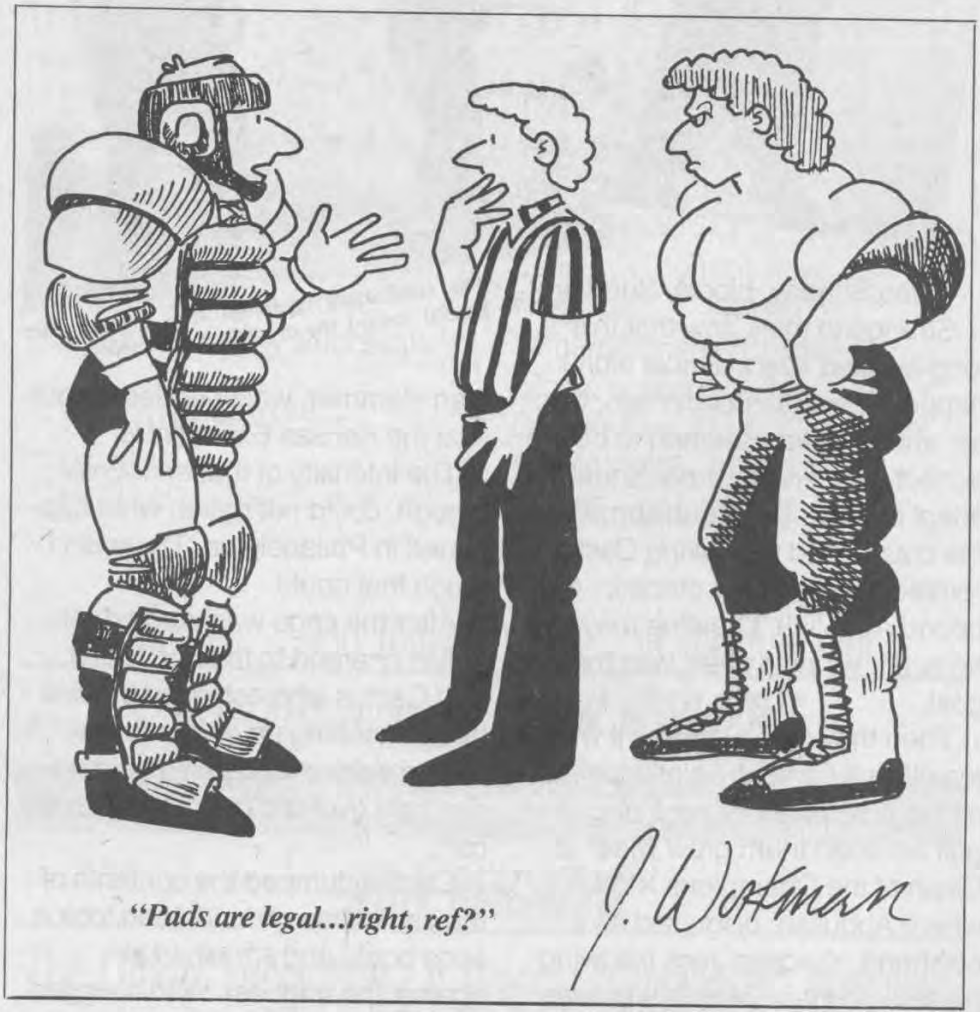
Buddy Landell (left), whose match with 71-year-old Buddy Rogers was canceled when Tri-State folded, is headed for the WWC in Puerto Rico. The mat world was saddened by the death of Buzz Sawyer (right), who was just 32.

apparently left the WWF . . . **Buddy Landell**, the last Tri-State champion, has ventured to the World Wrestling Council in Puerto Rico.

Veteran star **Buzz Sawyer**, 32, died on February 7 in Sacramento, California. Sawyer, a wild rulebreaker known as "Mad Dog" throughout his 13-year career, was found unconscious in his apartment by his girlfriend. An ambulance brought him to San Juan Hospital, where he was declared dead on arrival. At press time, the final autopsy report was pending, according to hospital officials.

Sawyer stared in the World Class, WCW, WWF, Japan, and several independents. He also ran his own wrestling school. Famous for his powerslam and violent demeanor—as well as his classic early-'80s feud with **Tommy Rich** and upset of The Road Warriors along with brother Brett—Sawyer will be remembered as one of the premier competitors of the last decade. □



ABDULLAH VS. JACK

(Continued from page 33)

After Abdullah won the match, he and Jack continue their bloody brawl against a nearby stage (below).

Despite being nearly blinded by his own blood, Cactus Jack fights off the referee to go after Abdullah yet again (above).

The combatants continued their war as they headed toward the dressing room (above).

It was Sunday, bloody Sunday.

Strange to think now that this long-awaited event almost didn't happen. Several months ago, Cactus and Abdullah seemed to be the perfect partners in crime. Equally adept at dealing out punishment, the crazed and risk-taking Cactus complemented the crazed, matbound Abdullah. Creating mayhem, not winning titles, was their goal.

Then they split. Perhaps it was too difficult for such volatile personalities to be allies for very long. The gulf between them grew wider at Clash of the Champions XVIII, where Abdullah, disguised as a cowhand, attacked Jack following his falls-count-anywhere win over Van Hammer, which ended up outside the Kansas Expocentre.

The intensity of that encounter, though, could not match what happened in Philadelphia. There isn't much that could.

After the cage was erected, Abdullah charged to the ring. But it was Cactus who achieved the first blow, sneaking up on the Sudanese madman and belting him repeatedly over the head with a trash can.

Cactus dumped the contents of the can on the ground, then took a soda bottle and smashed in against the ringpost. With a jagged piece of the green glass, he cut Abdullah across the arm and forehead.

The blood spewed sickeningly fast. Abdullah screamed, emitting the high-pitched wail of sheer terror. Children cried. Adults cringed.

When they finally got into the cage, Cactus retained the advantage, repeatedly jabbing the Butcher with a shard of glass. Abdullah has absorbed an incredible amount of punishment in the course of a 34-year career, but rarely had he taken so much torture in one night.

For Abdullah, it was time to strike back. He pulled a coat hanger out of his boot and choked Jack with it. He went into his boot again and pulled out another foreign object, using it to open up Cactus. Now both combatants had hurt each other with prime cuts.

The flows of blood in the ring were complemented by Abdullah's bloodcurdling screams. They were ear-piercing, frightening to adults as well as children.

"I was covering my kids' ears," said fan Richard Flutes. "And I didn't enjoy it too much myself, either. It sounded like a parrot being strangled. I hope I never hear such a sound again."

Altogether, the "match" only lasted about five minutes, but they were 300 seconds of pain and terror and gore. It all ended when Abdullah punched Jack, then pushed him over the top of the 15-foot cage.

Officially, the match was over, but the mayhem continued. Around ringside, up and down the aisles, onto a stage; Cactus and Abdullah were relentless in their attempts to make each other suffer.

Many fans actually enjoyed the spectacle. For many more, it was all too much to stomach.

"If you take these guys, put them out on an island, and let them go at it tooth and nail, you still wouldn't be giving them what they deserve," said Betty Nailing, a longtime Philly fanatic. "I enjoy a good action-packed match, but Abdullah and Cactus go way too far. They should open their own blood bank, that's what they should do. We don't need this kind of sickness."

What fans didn't see was the action in the locker room. After finishing with Cactus, Abdullah turned his aggression toward *PWI* Senior Editor Bill Apter, headbutting Apter and heaving him to the ground.

"Abdullah may be a veteran," Apter said, "but, like Paul Simon sang, he's still crazy after all these years. I've covered this sport for more than two decades, and I've never been so disgusted by the actions of a wrestler. I have half a mind to send the big monster my dry-cleaning bill! It's the last time I'll photograph him away from the ring."

Cactus, despite having lost, was gleeful.

"You people think what *I* do is crazy?" he asked rhetorically through heavy breathing. "Well, maybe it is, but it's not out of the ordinary for Cactus Jack. The blood doesn't worry me like it worries all you people. I *expect* to lose blood. It's not like you lose blood and it doesn't come back. What's a few drops of the red stuff here and there? Maybe Abby got the 'W' tonight, but we'll meet again and I'll beat him up again."

Because there were no Arabic (the official language of Sudan) translators at the Civic Center that night, Abdullah wasn't giving any interviews. After the attack on Apter, he simply retreated to his corner of the locker room and meditated. He didn't even bother to shower off the blood. Just another day at the office for Abdullah.

Just another night of terror for the rest of us. □

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PRESS CONFERENCE

(Continued from page 31)

Hart did the night he lost the I-C belt?

PIPER: **Oh, yes *(laughs).* I wake up with a 104 fever and I figure, *hmmm,* something's wrong.**

APTER: The big question, though, is why he was not considered immediately for the rematch.

PIPER: **Well, it was two days later. Hart, after he lost, he put his tail between his legs and he went home. He pulled himself out of the Royal Rumble. Guys, this is a man's sport. I'm not knocking Hart. If he says he's sick, that's fine. But if you want to be a champion, and you wanna make a really big name for yourself, some of these things you've just got to push through. I've been probably, pound for pound, the toughest guy ever in professional wrestling to hang in there. I've been sick plenty of times, but it's never mattered.**

APTER: A lot of people, when they found out that you were going to be the challenger, said, "This man is crazy! He's going to wrestle for the Intercontinental belt, and then he's going to go into the Royal Rumble."

PIPER: **Were they psychiatrists?**

APTER: No, they weren't.

PIPER: **They should've been, because they're right *(laughs).***

APTER: Why did you *not* pull out of the Rumble?

PIPER: **That's backing up—and Roddy Piper never backs up from anybody. Besides, I could have been the first man in history to win both championships in one night. They say I'm crazy? I suppose so, but I gave an interview that said "dare to dream," and I meant it. Bill, you're a tremendous sportswriter, with great knowledge of our business. But you folks at *PWI* printed a story: "Roddy Piper: The WWF's Most Successful Failure" (September 1991). At that time, you guys were saying it was because I never won a belt. Well, now I've won a belt. And you know what? It don't make a lick of difference to me. I just was beating up The Mountie. And the Royal Rumble? To go after both belts? Yeah, crazy—first guy in history to do it. But the actual holding of the belt, or calling myself the champion, that egotism I don't have. That has nothing to do with it. The way I make my money is by *beating* people.**

APTER: This is the first time in eight years that you have won a title in the WWF. What did you feel like when you finally captured the gold?

PIPER: **To be honest, I feel like I've attained every goal there is in wrestling to attain. The actual title itself doesn't put me a notch higher or lower in the WWF. The only thing that was kind of cool was all the fans in Albany had signs that said "Dare To Dream." It meant a lot that they were listening so closely to me. It meant that they believed in me that much. So for the first time, for one small second at the Rumble, the fans and I were all on the same side. I felt the support, and I really loved them for that one small second. It wasn't something I was striving for. But it don't matter to me what you think of me. You guys again, in your magazine, wrote, "Oh, Roddy's all busted up, he's finished." Remember that one?**

APTER: Sure.

PIPER: **Well, now I'm the champ. Just when you think you have all the answers, Roddy Piper changes the question.**

After subduing Mountie, the "Rowdy Scot" prepares to use the shock stick on its fallen owner.

APTER: What about the Rumble itself? You were in until near the end, but you didn't win. What do you feel were the determining factors there?

PIPER: **Rick Martel was in the ring, and Rick has just come back from a layoff . . .**

APTER: He was on a modeling tour in Europe.

PIPER: **I didn't know you could model with a bag on your head *(laughs).* Anyway, he got me by the ropes. I had been in there a long time, and I had tried real hard in all my efforts not to get tied up. Martel was trying to hiptoss me over the top rope. All of a sudden, Sid Justice, who had been sittin' down for a long time—what did he pick, number 25?**

APTER: Actually, he was number 29.

PIPER: **All of a sudden he comes from behind and dumps us over. So my mistake was in locking up with Martel, who I don't believe to be a threat to me. I wasted too much time on him. Otherwise, I think I would've been the winner. With Flair, there's no doubt in my mind I could've gotten him out.**

APTER: Even though you have not had a pinfall victory over him since he came in?

PIPER: **I haven't had a clean victory, but I had a *victory.* Also, he has had a dirty victory over me. We've *both* had dirty victories, and we both came out champions that night. In facing Flair at the Rumble, I was nailing him. I knew it was gonna be hard, I knew it was gonna take time. I know he's a very durable athlete. But I was getting to him, and he was getting real tired.**

APTER: You mentioned Sid Justice earlier. When Sid threw Hulk over the top rope, most of the response we received was that Hogan was a sore loser. Do you have animosity toward Justice, and what do you think of Hogan's reaction?

PIPER: **I don't think "sore loser" is**

appropriate. I think in the heat of battle, Hogan wanted to win as much as anybody else did. He was very disappointed, I'm sure. He reached up to grab his hand, and shake it ...

APTER: No, no. He was trying to pull Sid over the rope—or that's how it appeared. Flair came up behind Sid, and with Hogan holding on, dumped Sid over.

PIPER: So we got a guy, Sid Justice, that has come from nowhere, beat no one, done nothing in our profession. Tell me what he's done of significance. Tell me what huge arena Justice filled. Tell me what children he has helped. Even if he wanted to be the nastiest guy in the world, what has he done? Nothing! This guy walks in, pretends he's a crowd favorite, walks in with really no credentials at all. Let's go back to SummerSlam '91. What's the first thing he did? Hogan tried to help him out, and Justice holds his hand up by his ear to hear the crowd.

APTER: But didn't Hogan invite him into the ring?

PIPER: Absolutely. So now here's a guy, Justice, that's supposed to take care of business, and he gets an injury and backs out, and Hogan has to take his place on several different occasions while Justice had his arm repaired. So we must look at the animosity that built up toward the Royal Rumble. There's Hogan, who got dumped by this guy who's nothing. Justice is *nothing.* I don't think Hogan's a sore loser. I think there's animosity there and I think it's well-deserved.

APTER: Some people have called Justice the second coming of Hulk Hogan.

PIPER: (laughs) Well, I don't think Hogan would agree with that. Second, I don't know there *can* be a second coming of Hulk Hogan. Third, I don't know who wants seconds of *that.*

APTER: Your schedule is now going to be stepped up because you have to defend the I-C belt every 30 days. How are you going to handle it? This time, you can't say, "I want to go and do a movie." You have a title to defend.

Piper was considering retirement before his longtime nemesis, Ric Flair, jumped to the WWF last year.

PIPER: It's gonna be real easy, and I'll give you the scoop before I tell the world on television: I'm going to take on anybody. Absolutely *anybody,* as many times in one night as they want to.

APTER: Wait a minute! You're telling me that in one night, you would wrestle Randy Savage, Sid Justice, Bret Hart ...

PIPER: Yes. I would wrestle them all—and not only wrestlers. I heard Tyson say, "I want to take on a wrestler after Holyfield." I welcome him.

APTER: Even after your battle with Mr. T?

PIPER: I hope he's that easy! Tyson's got to be twice as smart, because he knows to get his hair cut all the way, so I give him that much credit. I welcome L.T., Lawrence Taylor, too.

APTER: You'll invite anyone to challenge you for this title?

PIPER: Anybody. I fight for a living. And we've always got people out there who think they're tough and think that they can be champion. Folks, come on!

APTER: Sounds ambitious, but how about Flair? You're the ranked number-one contender to the World belt now.

PIPER: If somebody else wants to be the number-one contender against Flair, then they have to beat me. If Hogan wants to be it, if Savage wants to be it, come on, folks. Let's go. Otherwise, we're talking favoritism, aren't we?

APTER: I guess so.

PIPER: Then it's the same old thing. You know what it is? They're all afraid of me, and that's the truth. I really do scare Flair—and I scare Hogan because they don't know where they heck I'm coming from.

APTER: Roddy, the years certainly haven't mellowed you at all. Are there any last statements you'd like to make to the fans?

PIPER: I would think that this is just the beginning for the public to see a brand new Roddy Piper. I think the wrestling world is going to be slapped in the face a little bit. Again, your magazine—and if I read your magazine, *everybody* should—said when I had beat Curt Hennig several times on a countout when Hennig was the champion, "If Roddy Piper ever gets it, he's the most cynical, unpredictable, he'll be terrible! Pack up the babies, grab the old ladies! Look out!" Wrong again, guys. Roddy Piper isn't going to do anything just for attention, but I think that the people are going to be surprised at the new morality code that I have, and the 1992 phrase that I'm living by: "Dare to dream." □

WIN LOSE OR DRAW

BY ANDY RODRIGUEZ

PICTURE THIS: You're watching an important bout filled with great action. Wrestler Smith grabs Wrestler Jones and flings him to the far ropes, but instead of hitting the ropes, Jones smacks into the referee and knocks him flat. Moments later, Smith covers Jones for the pin, but the ref is unable to make the three-count.

Or how about this: Smith and Jones are engaged in an epic slugfest. Jones traps Smith against the turnbuckle. As the ref attempts to break them up, Smith takes a lusty swing at Jones, but accidentally hits the ref. He goes down hard, and once again, he's in no position to administer the count.

Those are more than just hypothetical situations. They happen all the time, in every federation. Hardly a card goes by that isn't marred by at least one instance of a ref being knocked on his keister. It's almost becoming an epidemic. Wrestlers and fans are getting fed up with it.

"You're in there battling for the title," said Sting, "and, man, that ref gets in the way. It's really annoying. It always happens at the wrong time, too, like when you know you have the upper hand and can't lose. You get down there for the pin, but there's no ref. You feel ripped off. Those guys have just got to learn how to get out of the way."

"When a referee takes a fall," Boston fan Raymond DiVincenzo recently wrote, "it just ruins the whole match for me, because right away I know that at least one of the wrestlers will get the short end of the stick. I could be watching the greatest match in history for 20 minutes, but as soon as the referee gets knocked out, the match *is* history."

Why do the officials go down with such frequency? I asked several of the sport's top refs.

"Believe me, I do my darnedest to keep out of the wrestlers' ways," said respected referee Dick Kroll. "Sometimes, though, I just can't move quick enough to avoid them. You have to realize that these men are bigger, stronger, and quicker than ever."

"You can't blame the referees entirely," opined WCW ref Randy Anderson. "I've been in a lot of situations where it's impossible to get out of the way in time. Besides, wrestlers are going after us deliberately all the time. Sometimes a man will whip his opponent into me, then give me a smirk, and I know he was targeting me on purpose."

"To do my job properly," said USWA arbiter Frank Morell, "I have to stay close to the action. That means taking the risk of maybe being knocked around once in a while. I mean, I don't enjoy it, but it's a necessary evil. I think any ref who overly complains about it should find another line of work. After all, this isn't tiddlywinks we're talking about."

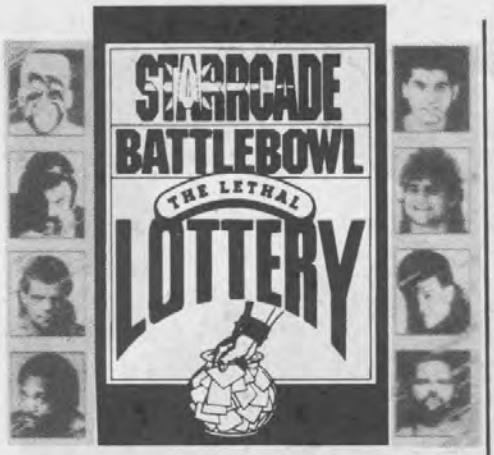
"I agree with what Mr. Morell said," offered PNW referee Sandy Barr. "We all knew when we put on the stripes for the first time that officiating can be a dangerous endeavor, even if you aren't actually wrestling. The way some of these behemoths barrel around the ring, it's a wonder we don't get hurt *more* often. I actually consider myself lucky to still be able to do this after all these years."

Nearly everyone involved believes this is a growing problem. The question is: How do you stop it?

"It seems like a very simple solution to me," said Terrence Taylor. "Referees have to be

(Continued on page 56)

When referees like Nick Patrick are injured in championship matches, controversy usually becomes the winner—and the fans end up losers.



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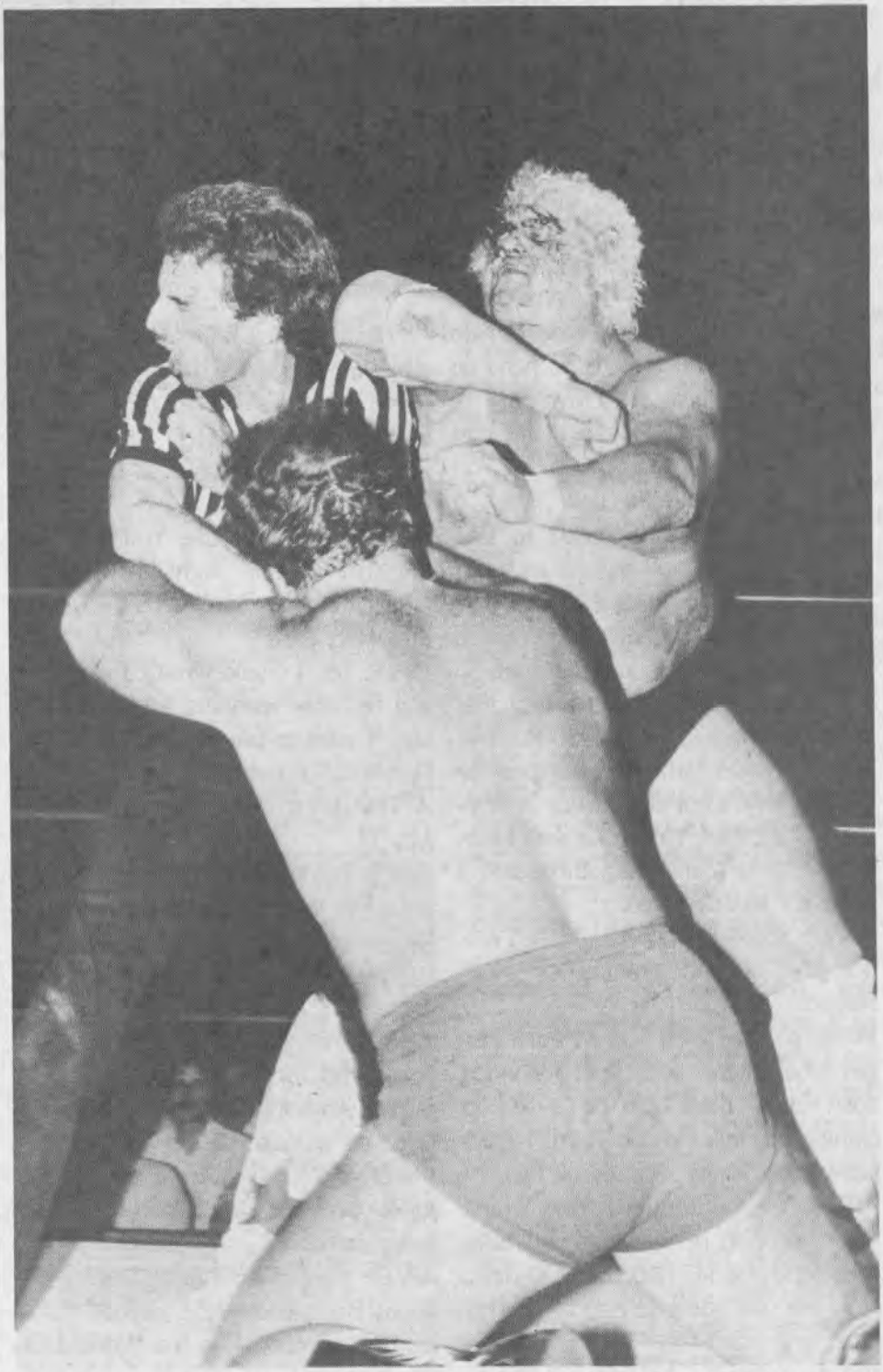
WIN, LOSE, OR DRAW

(Continued from page 12)

more on the ball. Half the time, these guys are too busy arguing with managers and not paying attention to what's going on in the ring. If they ignored the managers—and the fans, for that matter—there wouldn't be a problem."

Jeff Jarrett doesn't share the opinion of Morell, the man who has officiated hundreds of his bouts.

"These refs don't have to stand so close to the wrestlers," Jarrett said. "I respect Frank, and he's good enough that he can do a great job even if he keeps his distance. Like I said to him the other



Referees have to stay near the action. But often they risk serious injury by getting too close to the bigger and stronger competitors, as Bill Alfonso gets caught between Dusty Rhodes and Ron Bass.

day, 'Frank, you're a ref, not a wrestler anymore. Don't forget it.' He laughed."

Global North American Commissioner Max Andrews proposes a more comprehensive solution. Arguing that referees are always going to get in the way from time to time, he advocates stationing a second ref at ringside. Then, if the man in the ring is unable to execute his duties, his backup could step right in.

"If this isn't done for every match," Andrews added, "it should at least be done for title matches. When there's a championship at stake, it's crucial that every possible precaution be taken. I've discussed this with the GWF board on several occasions. I'm hopeful they'll come around on it soon."

I agree with Andrews' two-ref solution. Nearly every major federation has experimented with the format anyway; they should go ahead and make the arrangement permanent. And not only for title matches, but for tag team and six-man bouts, as well as battle royals—title or non-title. Any type of bout more likely to put the referee at risk calls for two refs.

Privately, most promoters and officials agree with the two-ref format in principle, but say the cost of such a measure is prohibitive.

"Sure, maybe the WWF and WCW could afford it night after night," one independent promoter told me. "They usually have more than one ref in attendance at all times anyway. But there's no way *I* could afford it. Putting at least two refs on the payroll for every single card would choke my business, which has had its ups and downs lately."

Financial considerations are important, but should not be overriding: The time is right for the two-ref format. Only when the referees themselves begin to protest, though, will meaningful change occur. □

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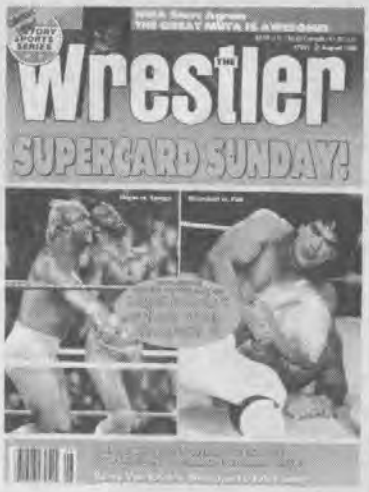

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WRESTLING ENQUIRER

UNDERTAKER SAVES ELIZABETH FROM "SNAKE" ATTACK!

Is The Ghoulish Rulebreaker Turning Good?

Following a tag team loss, Jake "The Snake" Roberts (left) was about to attack Elizabeth (center) with a chair. But The Undertaker (right) intervened, which led some people to believe he would become a fan favorite.

By ANDY RODRIGUEZ

AMARILLO, TX—Following an incident in which The Undertaker saved Elizabeth from being battered with a chair by Jake Roberts, speculation is increasing that the morbid rulebreaker is about to turn good.

The incident occurred on January 29 at the Civic Center, moments after Randy Savage and Hulk Hogan defeated Roberts and Berzerker. As Elizabeth preceded Savage into the locker room area, Roberts confronted her with the chair, prompting the lovely brunette to scream in terror.

Before striking Elizabeth, Roberts hesitated long enough for Undertaker to sneak up behind him and grab the chair, preventing Jake from swinging it. As they fought over control of the chair, Savage grabbed it and smacked Roberts in the back. Savage then pounced on "The Snake" as several WWF officials and referees attempted to restore order.

It was later discovered that Roberts had hidden in the locker room with the intention of blindsiding Savage with the chair, but decided to go after Elizabeth when he saw her first.

"Undertaker saved Elizabeth because he couldn't stand to see the woman get attacked," said one source who witnessed the incident firsthand. "The real surprise came when he didn't save Roberts from Savage's beating. That's why everyone's wondering if he's had a change of heart."

Volkoff Blasts Atlas For 'Disloyalty'

Fan favorite Nikolai Volkoff is enraged by the "criminal" actions of IWCCW champ Tony Atlas.

By DAVE ROSENBAUM

HAMBURG, PA—Big Nikolai Volkoff, like everyone else, is angered by IWCCW champion Tony Altas' rule-breaking tactics. However, the Soviet star is more perturbed by the fact that Atlas, a former Mr. USA bodybuiding champion, doesn't choose to extoll the virtues of his native country.

"Atlas could be a role model for the youth of this great country, but instead he chooses to act like a criminal," said Volkoff, a former rulebreaker who has become vastly popular since accepting the United States as his adopted home. "He was Mr. USA, but he doesn't care. Why is he so disloyal? Why does he break his country's rules? He doesn't know how good he has it here."

After Volkoff defeated Atlas by disqualfication on February 8 at the Field House here, Atlas grew livid when informed of Volkoff's comments.

"Why doesn't he go back to his *own* messed-up country?" Atlas fumed. "I beat him like a dog, so I'll probably never see him again. But if he *does* show his face around here again, I'll kick his fat butt right back to Russia."

Prichard Wins One Belt, Loses Another

By BOB SMITH

MEMPHIS—Two days after winning the Southern title from his arch-enemy, Eric Embry, Tom Prichard lost the Texas belt to young Brian Christopher—mainly because of Embry's interference.

During the February 8 title bout televised live on WMC-TV, Prichard had Embry locked in a headlock when Embry threw him into referee Kevin Christian. Embry then pulled a chain out of his boot and blasted Prichard with it.

As Embry attempted to revive Christian, Tony Anthony came to the ring and walloped Embry with a chain of his own. After Anthony placed Prichard on top of Embry, Christian got back on his feet and made the three-count.

Prichard was still savoring his victory as he began his Texas title defense against Christopher on February 10 at

Tom Prichard and Eric Embry have traded the Southern title five times in four months.

the Mid-South Coliseum here. After referee Paul Neighbors was knocked out, Embry gained his revenge by hitting Prichard with a chain. As Embry retreated to the dressing room, Christopher covered Prichard for the pin.

"It seems that Embry and I are destined to feud forever," said a groggy Prichard. "Well, I'll stay in the fight for as long as it takes!"

PNW Tag Title Held Up

By CHRIS BERNUCCA

PORTLAND, OR—The PNW tag team title was held up on February 8 here following a controversial match pitting The Bruise Brothers—Ron and Don Harris—against Steve Doll and The Grappler.

The Bruise Brothers came into this best-of-three-falls match as the champions. Doll and Grappler won the first fall when Grappler pinned Ron. After the fall, the Bruisers gave Grappler a double-DDT and worked over his left shoulder. The brother tandem continued the punishment on Grappler throughout the second fall, with Don finally pinning him after a second double-DDT.

Fall number three ended in confusion, as Ron pinned Doll at the same time Grappler pinned Don. After determining that Doll and Don Harris had been the legal men in the ring, referee Sandy Barr decided to hold up the title.

Despite reports that The Bruise Brothers are headed leaving PNW for the WWF, Ron Harris said he and his brother are determined to win back the PNW belts.

"We were ripped off!" Ron thundered. "We're not going anywhere until we take care of this unfinished business."

AROUND THE GLOBE

SAPPORO, JAPAN

Already established as the WCW light heavyweight champion, Jushin Liger added a second title when he regained the IWGP junior heavyweight title from Norio Honaka on February 8 here. Many fans believed it was Liger's greatest victory ever, as he soared high above the ring with several incredible aerial maneuvers. "I hope this is only the beginning," said Liger after his hard-fought victory. "Who says I can't add more belts to my collection?"

NAUCALPAN, MEXICO

A special card was held in this city on February 5, marking the eighth anniversary of the death of El Santo, perhaps the most famous masked grappler in Mexican wrestling history. "It's only fitting we honor Santo in this way," said veteran star El Canek. "He did as much for this sport as anyone in our country. He loved the sport so much that he was buried in his mask. Fans still visit his shrine often."

CHIBA, JAPAN

After Stan Hansen regained the "triple-crown" of Japanese titles—the PWF, United National, and International championships—on January 28 here, he startled the assembled press by announcing that he wanted to defend those belts in the U.S. "That's if the promoters let me do it," said Hansen, wiping tobacco from his chin. "I now consider myself a world champion. So why can't I defend my belts all over the world?"

CAREER CLOSEUP

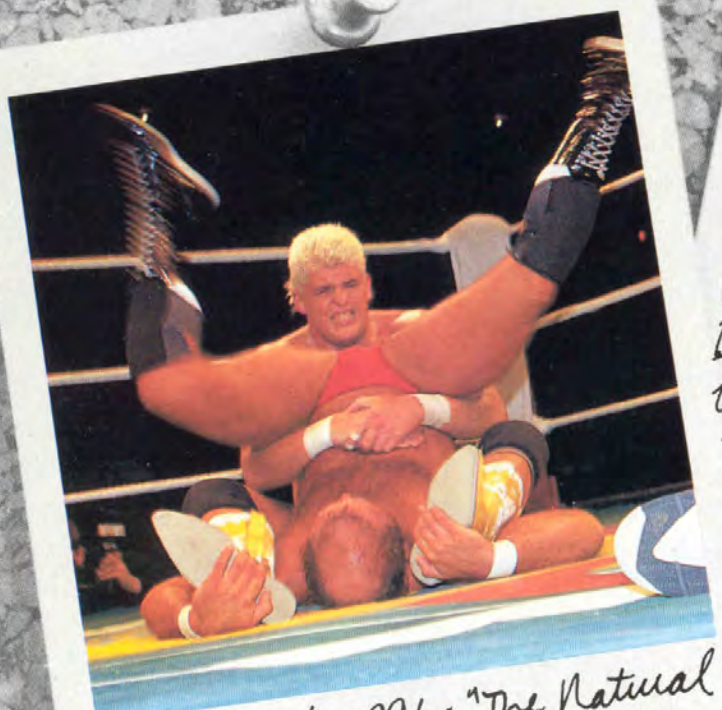
DUSTIN RHODES

Hometown: Austin, TX
Height: 6'4½"
Weight: 254
Years Pro: 4
Favorite Maneuver: bulldog headlock
Titles Held: WCW World tag (1991-92, with Rick Steamboat); WCW six-man tag (1991, with Big Josh & Tom Zenk); FCW heavyweight (1989); FCW tag (1989, with Mike Graham)

"The Natural" Dustin Rhodes has emerged from the shadow of his father, Dusty Rhodes, to become a major star in WCW . . . A multisport competitor in high school, Dustin was trained for the ring by Dusty for two years . . . Made his professional debut in the Florida Championship Wrestling federation on September 13, 1988, defeating Bob Cook in Tampa . . . In December, Dustin left FCW for the NWA, where he teamed with Kendall Windham as The Texas Broncos . . . Returned to FCW several months later . . . Frequently tagged up with his father . . . When the elder Rhodes left Florida for the WWF in the spring of 1989, Dustin continued his dad's feuds, the most notable being against Big Steelman (now Typhoon) . . . Teamed with Mike Graham to capture the FCW tag team title from Black Bart and Bobby Jaggers on May 9 in Tampa . . . Two weeks later, won the FCW heavyweight belt from Al Perez in Tampa . . . Lost the title to Kendall Windham on June 27 in Tampa . . . That summer, Dustin left the Sunshine State, choosing to compete in the CWA and USWA . . . Befriended Bill Dundee and feuded extensively with Robert Fuller's Stud Stable . . . Also received matches against Jerry Lawler . . . On October 2 in Memphis, reached the CWA title tournament final, losing to Tony Anthony . . . Was first runner-up in fan voting for 1989 *PWI* Rookie of the Year . . . Competed on the independent circuit in the South . . . In September 1990, appeared at ringside at a WWF television taping in Toledo, Ohio, to watch his father wrestle Randy Savage . . . Ted DiBiase and his bodyguard Virgil paid off fans to leave their seats and sat down next to Dustin, eventually attacking him . . . That began a lengthy feud pitting father and son against DiBiase and Virgil . . . Refused DiBiase's offer of employment . . . After Dustin and Dusty lost to their foes at the Royal Rumble on January 19, 1991, in Miami, Dusty retired from the sport and returned to WCW as a commentator, and Dustin was on his own again . . . In late-February, Dustin returned to WCW . . . At Wrestle War '91 on February 24 in Phoenix, he pinned Buddy Landell . . . Briefly feuded with Stan Hansen after Hansen made some nasty comments about Dusty . . . In the next few months, scored impressive victories over Larry Zbyszko, Terry Taylor, and Dutch Mantel . . . Began teaming with Rick Morton, but they split up after Morton bloodied him following a bout against Taylor . . . Spurned Alexandra York's offer to join The York Foundation . . . When he turned her down, she slapped him, then he kissed her on the lips . . . York would attempt to sign him several more times . . . Pinned Taylor at SuperBrawl '91 on May 19 in St. Petersburg, Florida . . . Ranked 131 in the *PWI* 500 (December 1991) . . . At the Great American Bash in Baltimore on July 14, teamed with The Young Pistols to defeat The Freebirds & Badstreet in a six-man elimination match; Dustin pinned Badstreet to become the last man in the ring . . . Feuded intensely with WCW TV champion Steve Austin . . . Teamed with Big Josh and Tom Zenk to capture the WCW six-man tag team title from The Freebirds and Badstreet on August 5 in St. Joseph, Missouri . . . Concentrated more on his partnership with Barry Windham . . . At Halloween Havoc, on October 27 in Chattanooga, Tennessee, Dustin wrestled Austin to a draw . . . After WCW World tag team champions Arn Anderson and Larry Zbyszko—The Enforcers—smashed Windham's right wrist in a car door as he and Dustin arrived at Halloween Havoc, Dustin was left without a partner for their title match with The Enforcers at Clash of the Champions XVII in Savannah, Georgia, on November 19 . . . Just hours before the Clash, Rick Steamboat took Windham's place and they pulled off a huge surprise by winning the belts . . . Rhodes and Steamboat became prime targets for Paul E. Dangerously's Dangerous Alliance . . . On January 4, 1992, at the joint WCW/New Japan extravaganza in Tokyo, Dusty came out of retirement to team with Dustin; they defeated veterans Kim Duk and Masa Saito . . . In a best-of-three-falls match on January 16 in Jacksonville, Florida, Dustin and Steamboat lost the tag title to Alliance members Anderson and Bobby Eaton . . . Voted 1991's Most Improved Wrestler in *PWI* fan balloting . . . Dustin, Windham, Steamboat, and Sting appear to be headed for a Wrestle War '92 showdown with The Dangerous Alliance. □

May 9, 1989 - Dustin survives a bloody battle with Black Bart to win the FCW tag title.

December 1990 - Dustin had a brief stint in the WWF here taking on Rick Martel.

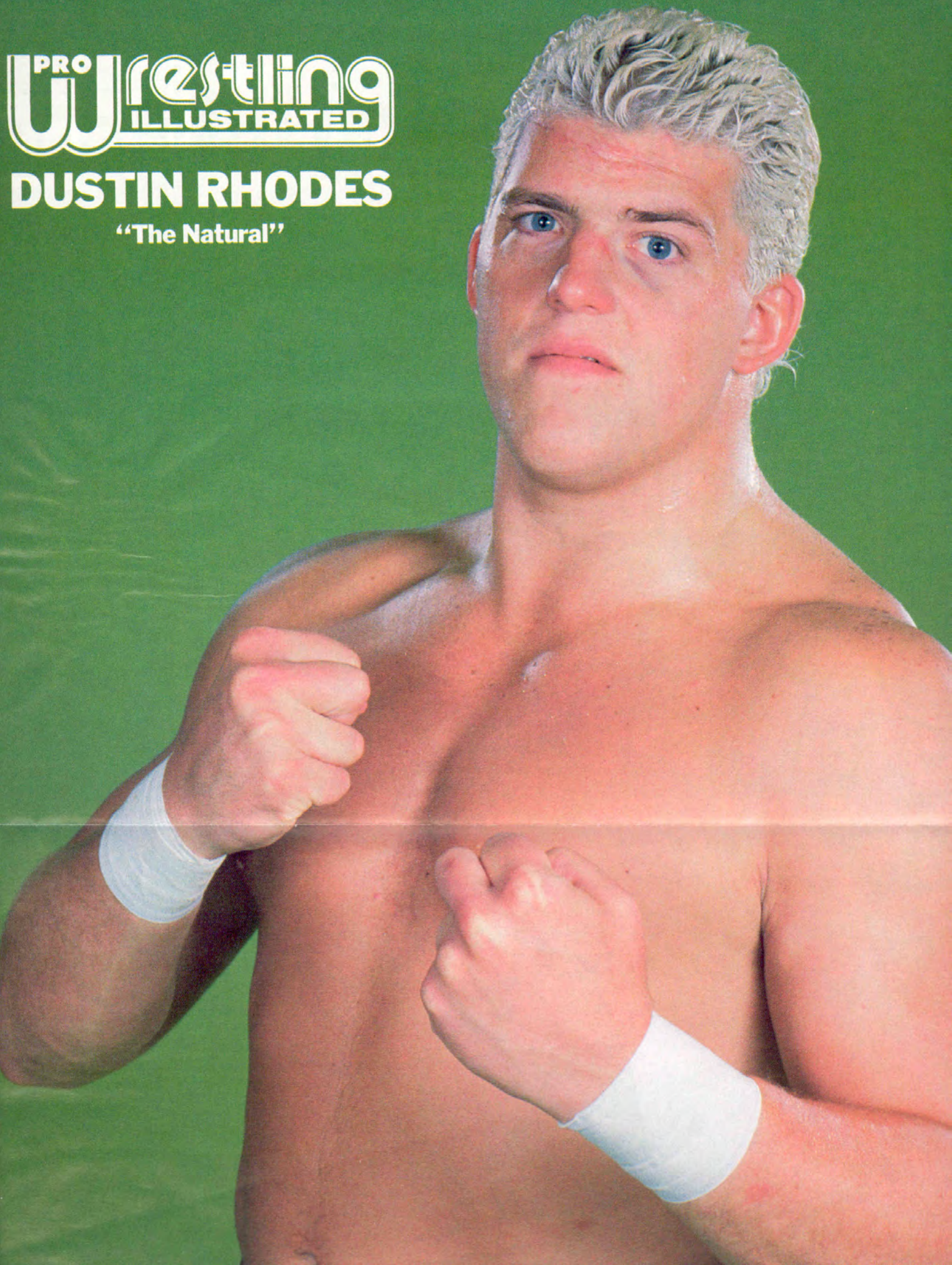


December 4, 1991 - "The Natural" defends his WCW World tag team title against Arn Anderson.

PRO Wrestling ILLUSTRATED

DUSTIN RHODES

"The Natural"



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